

# The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

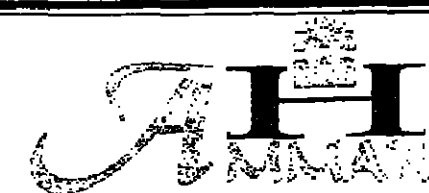
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AMMAN, 18-24 JULY, 1996, VOLUME 7, NUMBER 10, 350 fils

## Jordanian diplomacy intensifies ahead of King-Netanyahu meeting

By Ahmad Shaker

Special to The Star  
PRIME MINISTER Abdul Karim Kabariti's visits to Egypt, Syria and Israel this week fall within the context of intensified Jordanian efforts to revive the peace process. In his talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Mr. Kabariti outlined the need to resume Arab-Israeli negotiations on all tracks—Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian.

Cairo, Damascus, and Amman witnessed intensive diplomatic activity over the last few days in preparation for Netanyahu's coming visits to Cairo and Amman. The objective of these contacts has been to unify positions and present a united stand to the latest statements made by Netanyahu in Washington and New York during his recent visit to the US.

Netanyahu's statements and his speech before the US Congress underlined his unwillingness to commit himself to the principles that were agreed upon in Madrid in 1991.

Moreover, Netanyahu's stand on settlements has sent shockwaves in the Arab world. He insists on expanding settlements in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza to accommodate more than half a million Israelis within the next three years. This is seen as a violation of what was agreed upon with the former Labor government.

Jordan's stance on Netanyahu and his new government is clear as expressed by Information Minister Marwan Muasher this week. He said that Jordan will ask the Israeli government to honor its commitments. But he added that the Arabs must wait to see what the new Israeli government will do on the ground.

This position is also shared by other Arab leaders who met in Cairo last month. The government feels that it is Israeli actions rather than speeches is what really counts.



Kabariti meets President Mubarak in Cairo Tuesday

However, Jordan is seeking clarifications from Israel before it can take a position from the new government and this will be the center of discussions when Netanyahu arrives in Amman on the 25th of this month.

Discussions between His Majesty King Hussein and the Israeli premier will also aim at moving the stalled negotiations on the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian tracks.

The talks are expected to cover all major sticking points, and provide a more suspicious-

free environment. However, this may not be an easy task.

Jordan believes it is far better to continue to negotiate, but not for the sake of negotiations. It wants to give Netanyahu a chance to explain his policies and see if Israel and Syria can reach a peace agreement.

Peace is a strategic option for Jordan, Jordanian officials explained recently. They believe that the ball is now in the Israeli court.

Most importantly is Israel's latest change of position on the land-for-peace principle. The Arabs are dismayed at the weak US reaction to the change in Israeli position. They are not happy with the faint US response to Netanyahu's statements on settlements and others.

The American elections may prove a stumbling block. Observers fear that Washington will not put any pressure on Israel, until the race for the White House is over. In other words, the entire peace process will remain in danger, awaiting the outcome of the American elections.

## Lower House deputies mobilize to defend national unity

AMMAN (Star)—During the past 20 years Jordan has succeeded in building an integrated society despite all the tough challenges that have faced the country. A model of national unity, the origins of citizens served as a factor of stability and progress.

Recently, national unity has come under threat, as two distinct and opposing forces began to surface, one claiming to speak on behalf of East Bank Jordanians and the second claiming to defend the rights of Jordanians of Palestinian origin.

While such divisions would have been nipped in the bud few years ago, the reality is that talk of denying Jordanians of Palestinian origin of some, if not all, of their Constitutional rights, has become louder. Some so-called ultra-right Jordanians have written openly in the local press calling on the government to protect the threatened rights of East Bankers, while ultra-right Palestinians are openly talking of being subjected to discrimination.

Both trends were given a platform to express their views; mostly in the weekly newspapers and in some dailies. The weeklies found such a contro-

versial issue a gold mine to sell more papers. With catchy headlines, many of the articles that were published were aggressive and insulting.

The continuation of such a debate became irritating not only to the general public which found such topics in poor taste, but also to the government, which in most cases did little to stem an irrational debate that was getting out of hand.

His Majesty the King called on the press and citizens to practice responsible freedom and reiterated that he was personally responsible for protecting national unity. Furthermore, the King did not hide his disgust with what some of the weekly papers had published, lacking objectivity, accuracy and credibility.

Most popular organizations and political parties joined the King in expressing their rejection of the ongoing trend and prominent personalities rallied to confront those who try to harm social integration.

This week, the deputies, who for most of time were bystanders, finally decided to do something and met informally on Monday to discuss what was turning into a serious phenomenon.



Deputies meet in Parliament to discuss national unity

At the end of their meeting, they released a statement in which they reminded everybody, themselves included, of the urgent duty to safeguard national unity.

"The Lower House of Parliament serves as the country's main forum for exercising political pluralism and freedom of expression," Lower House Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Al Srouf told reporters after the meeting.

"Acting with this spirit, the deputies agreed that the law must be strictly applied in cases where violations against national unity have been committed in writing, seminars, lectures or other ways."

Deputies issued a warning against those who play with the country's internal unity. They said that a new legislation, if needed, would be instituted to deal with such violations.

On Tuesday, the Lower

House issued a statement urging all constitutional authorities and the media to take measures to put an end to what it called "actions and writings on the part of certain groups trying to harm national unity and Arab and Islamic values and ethics."

The people's representatives argued that Jordan has always served as an example of national unity under the Hashemite leadership.

"Jordanians have always acted as partners in building and protecting national security. Together, Jordanians worked to safeguard the country's interests," the statement said.

But recently some writings and comments have tried to damage the structure of national unity and harm the country's Arab and Islamic values, the statement said.

In their statement, deputies presented seven guidelines to protect national unity:

■ The Enhancement of the sense of national belonging among Jordanians through educational and cultural channels, the media and religion.

■ The Strengthening of the principles of justice and equality. Dealing firmly with any

Continued on page 2

## Jérash retrouve son festival culturel

Voir page 12

## Israel to ease closure of West Bank, Gaza Strip

By Glenn Frankel

LA Times-Washington Post

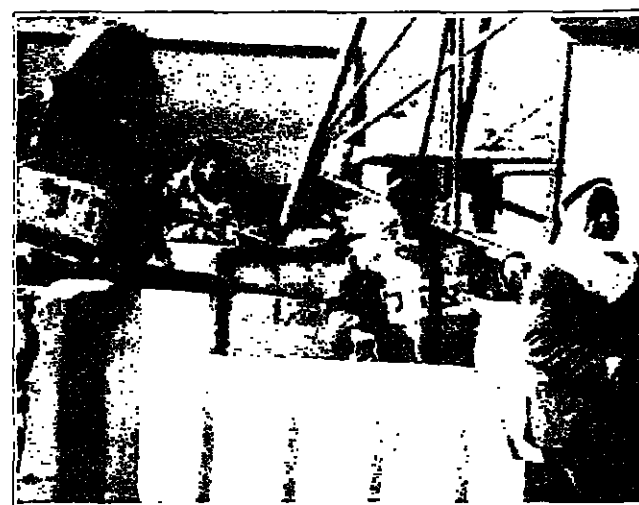
News Service

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—

Israel announced Tuesday that it will ease the 19-week closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip that has kept tens of thousands of Palestinian workers from their jobs and contributed to economic strangulation of Arab towns and villages.

Although no details were disclosed, the move was seen as the first concession of the new right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and to Arab states championing the Palestinian cause. It was announced two days before Netanyahu is scheduled to fly to Egypt for his first talks on Middle East peace with President Hosni Mubarak.

Netanyahu met Tuesday night with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, who earlier in the day had met with Mubarak. Jordan, which signed a peace accord with Israel in 1994, has been one of the Arab states most inclined to give Netanyahu's new government the benefit of the doubt on the peace process. But in recent days, King Hussein's govern-



Netanyahu's statements worry us a lot," Kabariti told

ment has taken a more hands-off approach, following the Israeli prime minister's tough rhetoric during his visit to the United States.

Arab leaders have expressed alarm over Netanyahu's recent statements that he does not accept the land-for-peace formula that for years has underpinned peace negotiations and that his government plans to expand Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza.

"Netanyahu's statements worry us a lot," Kabariti told

reporters in Cairo.

While Netanyahu prepared to meet with Arab leaders, he still has refused to announce a date for a meeting with Arafat, who is said to feel humiliated and angered by the prime minister's snub. In retaliation, Palestinian officials said, Arafat refused to meet with Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, who called Monday night requesting what would have been his second

Continued on page 2

## Human Rights Watch blasts Israel's closure policy of West Bank and Gaza

AMMAN (Star)—In a 58-page report entitled Israel's Closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, released this week, Human Rights Watch charges that Israeli-imposed restrictions on the movement of Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip violate Israel's obligations under international law, which proscribes collective punishment and requires an occupying power to ensure the welfare of the occupied population, including ensuring food and relief supplies and medical care.

For more than three years, a general "closure"—the term referring to the sealing of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip—has prohibited the movement of goods and individuals from or into the West Bank or Gaza, and movement between the Occupied Territories, except for the few Palestinians in possession of permits issued by Israel.

In addition, Israel has repeatedly imposed "total closure," preventing even those who hold valid permits from entering or leaving the West Bank and Gaza. Although several

members of the new government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have proposed easing or lifting the closure, no policy exists to ensure that, in the event of a future reimposition of closure, relief would be provided to offset the harm to the Palestinian population.

According to Eric Goldstein, acting executive director of Human Rights Watch/Middle East, "The closure of the Occupied Territories does not merely create inconveniences for Palestinians; it adversely affects the ability of the popula-

tion to meet its basic needs and amounts to collective punishment. Instead of being tailored to prevent individual acts of violence, blanket restrictions on movement have been applied to entire portions of the population, in a punitive manner and without regard to individual responsibility."

The report describes the two-week state of siege that was imposed on the West Bank and Gaza in the aftermath of a series of four suicide bombings in February and March 1996 that

Continued on page 2

## Palestine team wins an Olympic challenge

AMMAN (Star)—The International Olympic Commission (IOC) has decided to allow Palestinian athletes participating in the Atlanta Olympic Games to be known as the "Palestinian Olympic Team" and to march under the flag of Palestine. US officials said that although the US does not recognize a state of Palestine, it will respect the decision of the IOC. According to press reports, the IOC rejected on July 15 Israel's request to block the Palestine delegation from using the name Palestine. Palestinian athletes have competed under the Palestine name at other sports events, such as the 1995 world championships in track and field.

## The salt-water life and hard times on Mozambique's coast

By Lynne Duke  
LA Times-Washington Post

BEIRA, Mozambique—Francisco Chivamo lives on the sea. His father and his father's father did the same, as will his son, Manuel Francisco, when the 3-year-old grows old enough to cast a net.

The father will take his boat onto the Rio Buzi near its Indian Ocean mouth and teach his son to haul in the prawns that for generations have been the lifeblood of the Chivamo name.

On the sands of the Praia Nova beach in this central port city along the old spice and slave route, Chivamo, 30, gazes out at the ocean's expanse.

The sea, he says, "is good for people who know how to deal with the sea. I use the sea as my place of work. I get fish there. I swim there. So the sea, for me, is my life. Our life is the sea. Our life is fishing to provide for our future."

Mozambique's coastline is longer than that of the western United States. All who thrive along it are somehow tied to the sea.

They are small commercial fishermen like Chivamo, or large fleets from Mozambique and foreign lands, or small subsistence fishermen who catch what they can to feed their struggling families.

Like figures in a still-life portrait of Mozambique's desperate economy, women can be seen scattered across the sandy flats north of Maputo at low tide, bent at the waist, hands searching the sand for crabs, their colorful wrap skirts billowed by a breeze.

The sea is a source of life here, and most lives are hard, especially for the hundreds of thousands of refugees of the civil war that ended in 1992. They were driven from the hinterland to the coast to scrape out a living in one of the world's poorer countries.

Half of Mozambique's coastline includes the Sofala bank, which stretches north from Beira to Nacala, a region of this southeast African country of 18 million that is a historic melange of Bantu, Arabic, Portuguese and Indian colors and cultures.

Many people, African or not, are Muslim in the north, owing to the centuries-old southern reaches of sultanate empires from farther up the Indian Ocean coast. Mosques still grace the towns here, along with churches of the Catholic faith brought by the Portuguese—who came here to steal humans for the slave trade.

The Sofala bank is home to prawns, which became a strategic catch during the 17-year civil war. Agricultural production was so depressed by the war that Mozambique's export earnings from shrimp nearly doubled between 1989 and 1993, surpassing the cashew, cotton, sugar and tea that had been mainstays of Mozambique's plantation-based export revenues during the era of Portuguese colonialism that ended in 1975.

Along with Mozambique's limited commercial fishing fleet, large operations from Japan, Portugal, Spain and South Africa ply these waters. Small though they may be, local operations like Chivamo's help feed the local population.

Chivamo learned to fish when he was 11. Eight years ago, he left school to fish full time. Until two years ago, his was a

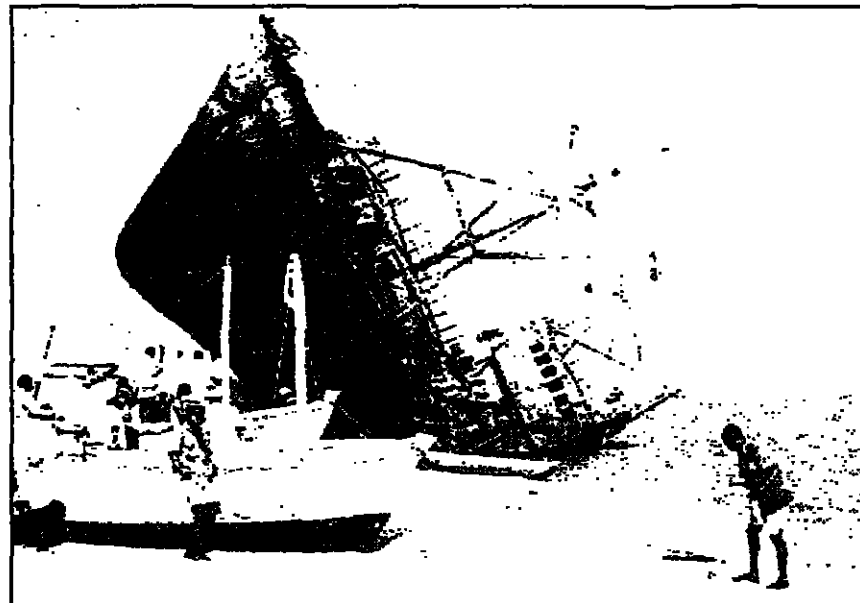
threadbare operation. He went out on the river in his dugout canoe, carved from a tree and propelled by paddles.

Then he bought a larger wooden boat, named the Laurina Ulombo after his 12-year-old daughter. He hopes to buy a bigger boat soon to expand his operation further—as he puts it, "to increase my life."

That increase is what fills Chivamo's thoughts as he and his dozen workers clamor aboard the Laurina Ulombo to head out for the casting of nets. Sometimes they work all day, all night and into the next morning, which is when they can be found here on the beach, packing the day's catch in ice. On this day, it was 600 pounds, sold already. Nearby, one of Chivamo's three brothers—all fishermen—is packing his catch.

The beach here is filled with fishermen like the Chivamos, filled as well with the flotsam of the sea. Hulks of wrecked vessels, large and small, lie like rotting or rusted skeletons emerging from the sand, abandoned by those whom the sea or the war or history has defeated.

There is another kind of fisherman, one whose life is much harder, whose survival



The rusted hull of a commercial ship rests on the Praia Nova beach in Mozambique, where fishing, in boats like those in foreground, has been a way of life for generations (Lynne Duke)

is more tentative.

They are men like Delito Afonso. He fishes farther north, near the town of Quelimane, on the Rio dos Bon Sinais. He is part of a contingent of people from Inhassunge, a town on the far river bank, who were forced by the civil war to move away from their homes.

Here, where the feet are bare and cloth-

ing tattered, there are no grand plans for increasing one's life. Here, the plan is to exist from one day to the next. Fish and corn are the staples of the diet.

"What we are doing here is fishing, getting food for the family, and that's it," said Afonso, 33, who fishes from a dugout canoe.

World Report





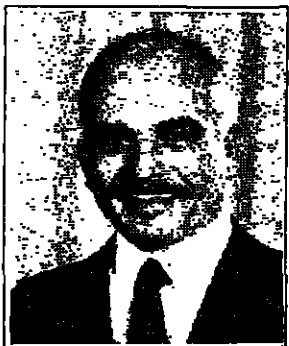
# JORDAN W E E K

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

## King praises MPs' stance on national unity

His Majesty King Hussein has sent a letter to Lower House Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Al Sour praising the House for its stance on the need to foster greater national unity among Jordanians. The Lower House had earlier debated the issue of threats to national unity and local traditions as a result of negative press coverage. Deputies also discussed the negative writings of columnists in the press on national unity. In his letter, the King said that the statement that the House made regarding this matter reflected genuine interest in safeguarding national unity. The King stressed that Jordan had always fostered and nurtured the values of brotherhood, tolerance, cohesion and solidarity among all its citizens regardless of their origins, birth places, ideological or political beliefs.

The King said that national unity is one of the sources of Jordan's strength. "I have said time and again that anyone who attempts to tamper with our sacred national unity will be my enemy forever," King Hussein pointed out. "It is the duty of every single member of the Jordanian family to stand firm against any attempt to tamper with national unity or distort Jordan's bright image," the King added.



ties. Theib Abdallah, the other Islamic deputy who split from the IAF, would not appear to be involved in forming the new party. Al Kasasbeh told Ad Dustour that he hadn't contacted Abdallah in three weeks.

### Immoral press becomes a national issue

Political parties and professional associations have sent memorandums to Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti and Lower House Speaker Sa'ad Hayel Al Sour expressing their anger at what they described as immorality in the local press. Over 100 opinion leaders also complained at the phenomenon of printing scant pictures in local newspapers. In recent weeks, some weeklies have resorted to sexual forms of sensationalism, publishing unsavory pictures in an effort to grab more readers. Even the state-run television has not escaped criticism. Many of those who wrote to the deputies complained of semi-nude and violent scenes on Jordan Television, arguing that such scenes do not fit with the Arab and Islamic values of the people. They called for setting up a national committee to supervise television programs. The memos stated that the purpose of television is not to serve a particular minority but the interest of the nation as a whole.

**Another newspaper on the scene**  
Very soon we will have another weekly newspaper on the scene. The government recently issued a license to a local company by the name of Daigham Khreisat and partners Co. to publish a weekly enti-

led Al Hayat.

### Ministry warns against flour hoarding

The Ministry of Supply and the Bakeries Association have warned bakeries against the hoarding of flour in anticipation of an increase in bread prices. The Ministry supplies flour to bakeries on a daily basis. It is feared that bakeries might stock flour or that some of them would go slow to save flour in an effort to gain the maximum from such a price increase when it occurs. This warning was made after the Ministry received complaints from the Consumer Protection Society that there is evidence of hoardings in certain bakeries. The society said it received complaints from people across the country that such practices are happening. Officials in the ministry said any bakery caught of carrying out such practices will be subject to severe punishment. Meanwhile, it seems that private companies are slowly toeing the government line and paying the difference in the bread rise by increasing the salaries of their employees. The Housing Bank is one of the first to embark on such a step. This was followed by Fine, the company that produces tissues in Jordan.

### JPA presents its recommendations

Jordan's Press Association has submitted its recommendations and remarks on the association's draft law that was originally drawn up by the government. The new JPA President Mr Seif Al Sharif presented the proposed amendments to Minister of Information, Dr Marwan Muasher who promised to study the recommendations very carefully before reaching any decision. The government had originally drawn up a draft law for the JPA without consulting it, a move that angered journalists. But a compromise was finally reached about a joint discus-

Why don't you follow the European example and eat without bread?



Jalal Rifai/Ad Dustour

## Queen returns from Bosnia

Her Majesty Queen Noor attended a ceremony in Tuzla, Bosnia, organized by thousands of Bosnian women to commemorate the fall of Srebrenica. Speaking to bereaved women, the Queen assured them that they were not alone. "The women of our land, too, have repeatedly borne the consequences of war and upheaval. They too have to rebuild lives and communities shattered by years of strife," Queen Noor said.



## GAM goes for the crux

The Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) is at it again, and three cheers for Dr Mamdouh Al Abbadi, GAM's general secretary. This man sees no end to improvement. Having developed the pedestrian and road networks in the suburbs of the capital, he is now aiming to get to the crux of the traffic jams in downtown Amman. He wants to end, once and for all, jams in the heart of the city by creating a system of tunnels. This would be marvelous in the long-term however people could see that this would be disastrous in the short-term because of the traffic chaos it would have. Can you just believe it, where would the traffic be moved while works are being carried out. But bold action needs bold men and Abbadi is just the man to do it. Starting very shortly works on the Al Haddadeh tunnel linking the city center will begin. The tunnel which links King Hussein Street to Wadi Al Haddadeh will be 190 metres in length. Dr Abbadi is adamant. There will be no chaos, he says, because of the very careful planning GAM is undertaking. The Al Haddadeh tunnel is part of a system of tunnels that will take place on partial basis to limit inconvenience and traffic mess. The project is to start very soon and GAM hopes to finish it by the end of the year.



Al Abbadi

### Sinai Rosefinch, national bird of Jordan

Jordan is a country of flowers and birds. To set off this image, a Royal Decree was issued last week making the Sinai Rosefinch (*Carpodacus sinuatus*) as the national bird of Jordan. The bird lives in sandy or rocky deserts. In Jordan, it can be found in Al Azraq, Petra, Wadi Rum and other parts of the south. Sinai Rosefinch survives on seeds, fruits, rose buds and flowers.

## Opinion poll on Arab security

It's the season of opinion polls. The latest study is by Bassem Al Tawseil from Mu'ta University. He carried out a limited survey on political awareness regarding the threat to Arab national security. More than 62 percent of the respondents thought that the lack of Arab integration is a principal factor that threatens the strategic depth. About 55 percent believe that foreign military presence in the Gulf and the Mediterranean is a major threat to Arab security, while 58 percent believe that the "ebb" in Arab nationalism is a major threat. The survey's results were based on a sample of only 316 people, but it is worth noting that it included the intellectuals of this country. Among those interviewed are academics, heads of cultural societies and independent thinkers. About 65 percent believe that a greater Israel is

still a major threat to Arab security, while 64 percent say it is Israel's position on nuclear weapons that is the principal threat. Surprisingly, 54 percent believe the major threat to the Arabs will come from Israel's neo-colonialist policies because it is built on intervention in internal Arab issues. About 25 percent believe that Iran serves as a major threat to Gulf security while 32 percent believe that it is the new Turkish-Israeli military alliance that threatens Arab security.

### New Islamic party is formed

The Jordanian Arab Islamic Party is in the process of formation. Mr Ahmed Al Kasasbeh, the deputy who recently broke away from the Islamic Action Front, is behind the new party. He said that at the moment he is discussing the idea of setting the party with Islamic and nationalist depu-

## Lower House deputies

Continued from page 1  
attempts to bypass these principles regardless of their sources. And immediate attention to grievances and complaints. Such action would uphold the principle of the equality of all Jordanian citizens before the law.

The representation of citizens should be through the constitutional organizations. No one or group has the right to claim representation of any one section of people under the pretext of defending people's rights.

The cabinet, Parliament, public institutions and the media institutions should serve as models for commitment to national unity and protect the nation's values and safeguard its ethics.

The Freedom of expression and freedom of belief are personal rights guaranteed under the Constitution, but these should always be exercised within the law and within the framework of Arab and Islamic values and higher national interests. These freedoms should not become at the expense of the freedom of others on any way.

The Press and Publications Law and the Penal Code should be enforced against all those who try to incite ethnic, sectarian, regional and factional extremism, or publish offensive material. The government is called on to honor its commitment to parliament by presenting the House with a draft law providing severe punishment for crimes of this nature.

The revival of the National Guidance Council and to empower it to safeguard the cohesion of the nation, becomes an urgent issue.

## Human Rights Watch blasts Israel's closure policy of West Bank and Gaza

Continued from page 1  
killed 58 people, in addition to the suicide bombers, and wounded two hundred. This was the strictest closure ever imposed in the history of the occupation, as Israel blocked movement among the cities, towns and villages of the West Bank and prevented the entry of food, relief and medical supplies to the West Bank and Gaza.

The report notes that the easing of this particular closure in late March 1996 did not end the crisis, since the "general closure" has remained in effect.

The closure does not only prevent the movement of Palestinians whose final destination is Israel. Due to the non-contiguity of the West Bank and Gaza and Israel's 1967

annexation of East Jerusalem, the sealing of the Occupied Territories also prevents the movement of those who wish to transit Israel or East Jerusalem in order to travel between the West Bank and Gaza, and makes it difficult to move between the north and south of the West Bank.

Israel has also virtually severed the access of Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza to East Jerusalem, which the international community considers to be occupied territory under international law, and is the medical, educational, religious, cultural and economic center of Palestinian life. According to Human Rights Watch, Israel remains bound as an occupying power under international law, despite

the Israeli-Palestinian accords establishing self-rule in parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

Although Israel has partially redeployed its troops and most Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza now live under total or partial self-rule, Israel continues to exercise the powers and functions of an occupier, including retention of the "overriding responsibility for security," as well as responsibility for external security and borders.

Through detailed legal analysis, the report concludes that the manner in which Israel implements restrictions on movement violates the 1907 Hague Regulations and the 1949 IV Geneva Convention, including the prohibition against collective punishment, and the requirements that an occupying power ensure the welfare of the occupied population, and ensure food and relief supplies and medical care.

The report documents the adverse impact that the closure has had on the welfare of the population, by preventing health-care personnel from

reaching their workplaces or providing emergency services, interfering with the movement of ambulances and severely hampering patient access to both primary and specialized health care. In addition, the report notes that the closure prevents thousands of students from attending schools and universities and interferes with both Christian and Muslim worship. It also separates families divided by the borders of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, and often prevents lawyers and family members from visiting Palestinians imprisoned or detained inside Israel.

In a section devoted to the economic impact of the closure, the report describes the onerous restrictions imposed on the movement of goods, accompanied by a sharp decrease in the number of Palestinians permitted to work inside Israel. These measures have further impoverished the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, leading to a rise in unemployment and an increase in the number of individuals and families requiring food or cash assistance. This, in turn, has required the Palestinian National Authority to divert contributions by the international donor community from investment and development projects to emergency job

creation or relief programs. Israel has no obligation under international law to create economic prosperity in the West Bank and Gaza or provide jobs inside Israel to Palestinians. However, when its security policies make it difficult or impossible for Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza to meet their basic needs independently, Israel bears responsibility for ensuring that these needs are met. At a minimum, the report states, Israel has the duty to mitigate the impact of its security policies, with the goal of ensuring the welfare of the population. This duty is heightened in light of the history, throughout the occupation, of Israeli actions that kept the West Bank and Gaza economically dependent upon Israel and made tens of thousands of Palestinians turn to Israel for employment in order to meet their families' basic needs. Human Rights Watch emphasizes that Israel, whose security concerns are real and substantial, is not precluded from taking measures to secure the safety of its citizens. However, both Israel and the international community must subject any Israeli measures restricting the movement of Palestinians to greater scrutiny, in order to ensure that they are proportionate and discriminate.

## Israel to ease closure of West Bank, Gaza Strip

Continued from page 1

session with the Palestinian leader. Instead, Gold was invited to meet with lower-ranking Palestinian officials.

A statement issued after Tuesday's Israeli cabinet meeting said the easing of the closure had been decided by Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai "to alleviate the economic distress of the Palestinians." Officials said details of the measure will be released Wednesday.

Israel has been gradually easing the blockade, which the previous Labor Party-led government imposed 25 Feb. at the start of a suicide-bomb campaign by Palestinian militants that killed 59 victims. At present, some 25,000 carefully vetted Palestinian workers are allowed to enter Israel through military checkpoints. Previously, more than 120,000 traveled to Israel daily.

Palestinian officials have estimated the closure has cost workers and businesses in the West Bank and Gaza at least \$6 million a day and exacerbated an unemployment rate that is approaching half the eligible adult population.

Elias Freij, a cabinet minister in the autonomous Palestinian Authority and mayor of Bethlehem, one of the West Bank cities most affected by the closure, said that Palestinians will insist on specifics before welcoming the easing of the closure but that he was encouraged by the Israeli announcement.

"I think the closure is neither in the interests of the Israelis or the Palestinians," he said. "We are both destined to live together in this country so the only way to live is to make peace and cooperate with each other. I believe Netanyahu is a practical man and he will serve Israel's interests by ending these restrictions."

While making concessions on land or the Jewish settlements would be difficult for Netanyahu, easing the blockade is a relatively painless concession in ideological terms. He and his right-of-center Likud party have traditionally opposed measures that separate the Palestinian population from Israelis because they hold that the West Bank and Gaza are part of the biblical "Land of Israel" and should not be divided by borders or restrictions.

But politically the price could be much higher. Any suicide-bomb attack would almost certainly result in the same kind of public trauma among Israeli Jews that gripped the country in February and contributed to Netanyahu's narrow election victory. He promised then that his tough-minded policies toward the Palestinians would provide greater personal security for Israelis.

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Israel to ease closure of West Bank, Gaza Strip

Continued from p. 1

A statement issued Tuesday by the Israeli government said it was prepared to ease the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

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## People & Politics

### National unity: Not an issue for the yellow press

The declaration of the Lower House of Parliament on national unity and His Majesty King Hussein's reiteration of the basic principles contained in that declaration could not have come at a more appropriate time. Jordanians from all walks of life have been waiting for a high-level confirmation of these principles, especially by the legislative body, since in recent years a perception has been building that the unifying factors that make up Jordanian society are under attack.

At the heart of the matter is the phenomenon of the sensational press, a by-product of the democratic evolution that has dug roots since the early 1990's. While the Constitution and our democratic traditions guarantee the right of free expression to any Jordanian, that right has been abused by a few who failed to recognize that with freedom comes social responsibility. In recent years some weeklies have trespassed on basic national social, political, religious and cultural tenets of our Jordanian society, creating divisions, anxieties and spreading negative values and thoughts that are alien to our society.

For these publications, and those who write in them, the excuse has been freedom of expression and free press. The government and the legislative body have failed to activate existing laws and regulations which regulate the press and protect individual and collective social rights. In this regard the blame is shared. While we call on the government and the deputies to safeguard and respect our Constitutional rights including the right of free expression, we believe that laws and regulations should protect national unity, individual rights of citizens and the free press from those who abuse these rights.

There are certain responsibilities that deputies bear at this stage. When it comes to the press, for instance, Parliament must address issues relating to that profession by incorporating journalists and their representatives in the process of reform. Many options have to be examined and the press community must be given the opportunity to put its house in order. On the other hand, there is a need to give the National Charter, an historic document by all standards which is unique to the whole region, a legal arm to implement and protect the lofty principles on which all Jordanians had agreed.

We must remember that yellow journalism, publications thriving on selling sex, violence, controversy and other forms of sensationalism, cannot be eradicated overnight. That process of reform must not be seen as an infringement on the press as a whole. May be it's time to study further the options of a national press council working in tandem with a national guidance council, both of which should be independent of government control.

The pains of a developing democracy are no different from the trials of a developing country. Both put a society in transition before cultural, political and economic challenges. Jordanians, like other developing societies, cannot afford to become introverted or to shy away from these challenges. One thing is for sure, national unity is the life-blood of this country and no matter how it is threatened or compromised, Jordanians, whether the public or in positions of authority, must not look the other way and pretend that all is well.

### Subsidizing the deputies

Is there an allowance or isn't there? That is the question on people's mind ever since *Ad Dastour* daily announced that a Royal Decree was issued approving a monthly JD 150 personal driver allowance for senators and deputies. The next day Minister of Higher Education Abdullah Nsour denied the report, only to be rebuffed by the same newspaper which stood by its story and supported it with documents.

According to the paper, the allowance became valid on 16 July. So what's the government's next move? Basically, the report could have passed unnoticed if it was published a month ago, before the famous bread debate.

Call it bad timing, one has to admit that the issue is embarrassing to both deputies and the government, both of whom have been promising each other, and the public of course, that belt tightening will continue and that public spending will have to be curbed and subsidies removed. Well the public has a right to be angry.

If Jordanians cannot afford their own chauffeurs, then their representatives must show some sensitivity at a time when the whole nation is talking about the effect of removing bread subsidies on low-income people. If subsidies are on their way out then why should the public subsidize what can only be seen as a luxury enjoyed exclusively by the people's representatives? We say the deputies should refuse the allowance or call upon the government to divert the funds allocated for it to the state budget.

## Dr Munther Haddadin

# 'Water is used to extinguish fires and not to ignite fires'

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

Dr Munther Haddadin is a well known expert on water affairs. He was a member of the Jordanian delegation to the peace process that started in Madrid in 1991. Between 1992-95, he headed the delegation to the Water Resources Working Group. Between 1994-95, he also headed the delegation to the Steering Committee of the Jordan Rift Valley. He received his doctorate in engineering from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1969. He now has a consulting engineering firm in Amman. He talked to *The Star's* Raed Al Abed about the water situation in Jordan and the Middle East. Excerpts follow:

How do you see the future of the water situation in the region? Is it as bad as it looks?

This region has the lion's share of deserts. It is arid and semi-arid, with the exception of the fertile crescent, the south west corner of the Arabian peninsula and the north west corner of Africa. You cannot produce food in it without irrigated agriculture.

The number of rivers in it is also limited and these are premier flows that cross the territories of more than one country.

The population of the region has been increasing, more so in certain localities than in others. At no time in history can we remember that the numbers have jumped to the levels that we have today.

Supply is limited. The demand has increased, contrary to what many describe it. They see it as water shortage or water crises as though it is the fault of water resources, but these resources have been the same throughout history, they fluctuate around a stationary average and they have not changed much. What has changed is the population.

You say in one of your studies that all water sources in the Arab world came from outside. What is the likely effect of this?

But this is not particular to Arab countries; it is a world-wide phenomenon. A great many of the famous rivers, originate in the territories of other countries.

It is important, however, to have an understanding over the water sharing arrangements among the riparian on any international river, and an agreement on the preservation of the water quality of those rivers.

I do not think that their would be dangers emanating from just the water resources originating from the outside.

If taken in isolation, these water resources would be a motive for cooperation, not for conflict. The conflict arises, when there are other factors involved.

You take Turkey and Syria, they have other reasons, every body knows about them. On the Nile, between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, water is used to extinguish fires and not to ignite fires.

There are water agreements between Arab countries but these have not proved effective: Syria-Jordan in 1987, Iraq-Syria in 1990, Egypt-Sudan in 1957

and others. Why was this?

All these agreements are partial, they are not comprehensive. There was an agreement between Syria and Iraq over the Euphrates, but there is a third riparian and that's Turkey. Over the Nile, the agreement was between Sudan and Egypt, but again on the Blue Nile you have Ethiopia, on the White Nile you have seven other African states that are riparians to the White Nile.

In our case with Syria, it is over the Yarmouk river, again there is a third riparian, that was not involved in that agreement, that's Israel, and that I think was the reason why the agreement was not getting to its objectives.

The agreement was made with Syria to build a dam on the Yarmouk River. Financing a dam on any international river would condition the agreement among all the riparians on that river. Israel was left out, and it was not possible to have that dam financed by such bodies as the World Bank. Once there is an agreement concluded between the riparians, then they abide by it. Syria and Iraq are abiding by the agreement they concluded. They agreed that they would share the waters of the Euphrates that cross the joint borders between Syria and Turkey, in a percentage of 58 percent for Iraq and 42 percent for Syria. But to make it effective, you have to include Turkey. The same applies to Sudan and Egypt.

How do you see the issue of water in Jordan-Israeli relations?

Water was a primary item of dispute before the treaty and the treaty specified an agreement over water. My own role ended back in May 1995. I had the honor of negotiating the water annex in the articles about water in the treaty, and followed up its implementation for a couple of months until May, when government officials took over. Recently, a joint water committee was set up. I think that any problems that may erupt can be handled in that committee. If that committee is not able to resolve the disagreements, if there are any, then the higher political levels should be able to resolve it.

Several problems have erupted lately over water between Jordan and Israel, in particular Israel's delay in pumping Jordan's right of the annual 50 million cubic meter.

The treaty specified additional waters: 50 million cubic meters per year to Jordan, and that the source of that water should be defined within one year after the treaty comes into effect, and that makes it 10 November 1995. Israel and Jordan should have jointly specified the



Haddadin

their sole representative [PLO] to negotiate with Israel, and I believe this will be on the agenda of negotiations on the final status talks.

Do you believe in the saying that the next war in the region will be on water?

People who believe in that are wrong, simply because taking water resources alone, to my belief, will not be any worse off; it will trigger cooperation. Because we will be in similar boats.

The most stressing in water resources, in most part of the region is over-population, that is what they ignored. The over-population is in Israel, Palestine and Jordan; these territories and their water resources which are traditionally used for irrigation of agriculture, are able to support between 4.5 to 5 million people. We have today a population of 12 million. That shows you it is not the fault of water resources, it is rather over-population. And we know how was that caused. That shows you it is not the fault of water resources, it is rather over-population. And we know how was that caused. That shows you it is not the fault of water resources, it is rather over-population. And we know how was that caused.

These countries have more population than the water resources can sustain, on the one hand, and they do not have the energy resources. And energy is the twin to water, because from water flows you generate energy and conversely from energy you desalinate sea water and produce fresh water. These three countries do not have the energy sources.

What are the challenges ahead facing this region?

The challenge would be to preserve what we have, not to degrade its quality. To manage it right, you do not over extract water from the ground, and that means better management. It also means spending, you have to invest. When you look at us, Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis, we three are the worst case. Israel has the advantage of having higher per capita incomes, that leaves Jordan and the Palestinians with over-population and less money to spend on water resources.

## Point of order

By Raed Al Abed

### Education for all!

While people are still in a state of panic about the government's intention to increase bread prices by 300 percent, some have received yet another shock. The decision of the Higher Education Council (HEC) to increase the fees for master and PhD programs in the six public universities is seen as a bad move.

It's a triple increase. For Master Degrees, the council is willing to hike the price from the current JD 20 for one credit hour to JD 60.

For PhDs it will be increased from JD 25 to JD 75. Also the tuition fee for MAs is tripled from JD 50 to JD 150 every semester. But that's not all. The enrolment fee has gone up from JD 5 to JD 15.

This decision almost kills the ambitions of many students who are registering or who wish to enroll in higher education.

The HEC says it wants to provide proper services for students of higher education because of the lack of facilities in these universities. But students shouldn't be made to cover these expenses, because this is education, the right of everyone.

The founding council of the general union of the Jordanian Students, which represents student organizations from the four main public universities, is talking about corruption in these universities. It maintains that officials are over-indulging and living it up with huge expense accounts, such as travel budgets.

The same council warned the government not to meddle with the educational system.

Officials in the University of Jordan talk about a JD 7 million debt, but it is not students who are behind this debt.

We repeat education is a basic right. The government should facilitate all means for our young people to take advantage of this right. We know that it is impossible to demand from the government to adopt a 'free education for all', a model practiced in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and other Arab countries; these countries are also suffering economically. We demand fair fees to allow all students, poor and rich, to receive higher education.

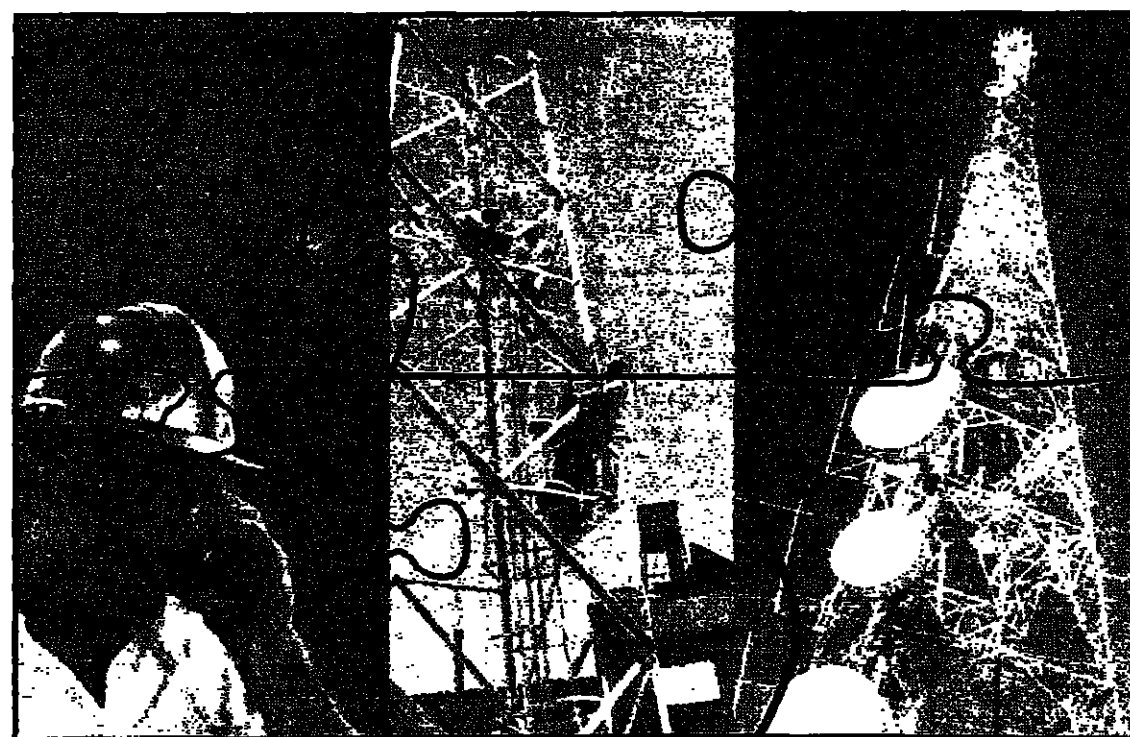
The HEC's decision will allow Jordanian students to choose between studying in Jordanian universities or go abroad. Definitely, most students will go abroad, for two reasons. Parents will find it cheaper in other Arab or Asian countries; in some countries it's only \$300 a month. The other reason is that young Jordanians feel there is a big opportunity outside Jordan for education and work, and even for a wish to see the world.

This would mean, more hard currency running out of the country. These will be added to the thousands of students who are already studying abroad.

So in the long run it will be better to keep our students home, helping them to become more productive members of society and becoming proud of what they achieved. Is it too much to call for a free higher education? We believe not.

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## LURIE'S WORLD



"Here... just stop playing!"

## Our Say...

## Jordan's diplomacy makes progress

JORDANIAN DIPLOMATIC efforts intensified this week in preparation for the first leadership-level Arab-Israeli contacts since May's Israeli elections. Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti's trips to Egypt and Israel on Tuesday were aimed at fine tuning the positions of Jordan and Egypt with regards to the upcoming visits of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to both Cairo and Amman.

Mr Kabariti's surprise visit to Tel Aviv, during which he met with Mr Netanyahu, was also aimed at informing the Israeli government of Arab positions with regards to the Middle East peace process in light of Mr Netanyahu's strong statements in the United States especially towards the land-for-peace formula.

Mr Kabariti's short meeting in Cairo with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa came at an important juncture. For one, the meeting has paved the way for a future visit by His Majesty King Hussein to Damascus, and secondly, it reiterated the position adopted by all Arab countries in their summit meeting in the Egyptian capital a month ago.

A reconciliation between Amman and Damascus will be a breakthrough for joint Arab action. Clearing the air between the two capitals should close any loopholes which Israel might use to weaken the Arab stand. That stand was buffered even further by foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration countries, who met last week in Oman.

In view of the series of Arab meetings that have taken place in recent days and week, Mr Netanyahu will have to study carefully his options before discarding Israel's recent diplomatic gains on the Arab front. He now knows that all Arabs are committed to the Middle East peace process as defined in the Madrid peace conference. He also knows that he cannot use Israel's special ties with Jordan and Egypt to put pressure on the Palestinians, the Syrians and the Lebanese. And he also knows that he risks closing that window of opportunity for a long time, and may be forever, if he chooses to turn his back on Israel's obligations under its peace treaties and international agreements with the Arab parties.

Mr Netanyahu should listen to what Jordan has to say, not because Jordan, as some foreign observers believe, will become a bridge for Israel to cross into the Arab world, but because Jordan has done more than any party for the cause of a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. But Mr Kabariti made it clear that no matter what Mr Netanyahu believes in or wants to do, Jordan and the Arabs cannot envisage a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East without a territorial settlement based on international resolutions.

All Arabs will be watching in anticipation the results of Mr Netanyahu's visits to Egypt and Jordan. If the Israeli leader believes the Arabs will "adapt" to the new Israeli position then he will be committing Israel to decades of unsettling conflict with the Arab people. We have heard Mr Netanyahu's words loud and clear. It's time that he hears ours.



● Palestinian President Yasser Arafat with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Monday. Mr Arafat flew to Cairo to discuss the future of the peace process.

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## A view from America: The US is a watchdog being wagged by several tails

By Carrie Nelle Møye  
US Star correspondent

ONE HOPES never to generalize regarding groups of people, yet sometimes necessity dictates one does so, to a degree, that is.

And so it is with the Arabs. The Gulf-rich Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, do not have the deep roots of academic education and culture as we know it in the West and as do the countries more intertwined with Western history, such as Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and yes, even Iraq.

One must constantly remind one's self that in the newly rich states, today's leadership and citizenry, quite literally, are just two generations (three at most). Thus, theirs—especially the older generation—is a mentality much the same as that of the poor farmer who discovers oil on his property.

It is unfortunate that the typical American citizen has had to experience his first true contact with the Arab world through the Saudis and Kuwaitis. Of course there are many exceptions to the stereotype, including those delightful persons who have managed to live "down-to-earth" while their pocket books float in

the stratosphere.

Yet, for the most part, going from the camel to the Mercedes has produced precisely what the sociologist would tell one to expect: "My money can buy me anything" attitude.

And thus, it is that in Saudi Arabia, where the United States has thousands of troops stationed, both to protect Saudi and Kuwait from a potential invasion by Saddam Hussein. And let there be no misunderstanding, to protect our oil suppliers, the ruling family has been adamant about its ultimate control of the US troops on their soil.

The leaders refused to comply when the American commanding general asked for more distant security fences. They have refused to let the men and women behave as they are accustomed when they violate Saudi mores and customs. Even though they fear the US presence, they resent their own weakness that necessitates the American existence. And they refuse to yield command.

The United States, the surviving superpower, is unaccustomed to following orders. The Saudis and Kuwaitis, both proud people, are unaccustomed to following orders. (The Lebanese, Syrians, Iraqis, Jordanians,

and even the newly-rich Omanis, who learned by watching the mistakes of their neighbors, would have been more amenable to our joint needs and cooperation.)

Unfortunately this cultural chasm has been brought to light in the most horrible of ways recently in the form of the two bombings.

Saudi's King Fahd (his health no longer allows him to be in control; his brother, Prince Abdullah is the power today) continues to insist on one else will command his country.

This mentality is understandable but our own reality dictates that if US troops are going to protect an ally, then the US must be given reins of authority as to the control of the security of its troops. Yet we seem unwilling to demand this.

In effect, today the US faces a situation where the tail is wagging the dog. Does this sound frightfully familiar? For how many years has Israel also been the tail wagging the dog?

So now we have the tremendous irony of two historical enemies who, until the recent Israeli elections, were in deep negotiations for peace and now find

themselves both tail-wagging the United States. And being wagged from both ends is decidedly unique and equally uncomfortable. (When viewed as this analogy, it appears damn near impossible, but the reality is that it is happening.)

The US is the superpower, yes. And we do not want to abuse that highly esteemed position, no; we have no desire to be seen once again as "the ugly Americans." But at some time in the near future, our leaders must take a stand for all those tenets on which we were built and not be so influenced by allies who certainly assist us but who depend upon us far more. The American public needs to be shown the reality of our foreign policy, and not continue to be subjected to biased reporting that all too often has become an accepted standard.

Israel, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait should expect a reasonable amount of help from the United States but their hubris must be curtailed by our leadership. When the watchdog becomes more tail(s) than body or head, we shall become ineffective. Perhaps more importantly, we shall lose our self-respect. ■

Nizar Qabbani:

## The face of Qana

EDITOR'S NOTE: Nizar Qabbani, (the Arab world's "poet of love") wrote this Qasida about the Qana massacre during Israel's two-week Grapes of Wrath on Lebanon that occurred on 11 April. This is an excerpted translation:

The face of Qana  
Pale, like that of Jesus  
and the sea breeze of Nisan...  
Rains of blood... and tears...

They entered Qana stepping on our [charred] bodies  
Raising a Nazi flag in the lands of the South...and rehearsing its stormy chapters...  
Hitler cremated them...  
and they came after him to burn us...

Hitler kicked them out of Eastern Europe...and they kicked us out of our lands...  
Hitler did not find the time to destroy them and relieve earth of their mischief...  
They came after him...to destroy us...

They entered Qana  
Like hungry wolves  
Putting to fire the house of the Messiah...  
Stepping on the Thob of Hussein, and the dear land of the South

Blasted Wheat, Olive-trees and Tobacco and the melodies of the nightingale  
Blasted Cedars in his bark  
Blasted sea and the gulls  
Blasted hospitals nursing moms and schoolboys...

Blasted the beauty of the Southern women and murdered the gardens of the honeyed eyes  
We saw the tears in Ali's eyes  
We heard his voice as he prayed under the rain of bloody skies...

Whoever will write about the history of Qana will inscribe in his parchments  
This was the second Karbala

Qana unveiled what was hidden

We saw Amrika wearing the old coat of a Jewish Rabbi

Leading the slaughter  
Blasting our children for no reason

[Blasting] our wives for no reason  
[Blasting] our trees for no reason  
[Blasting] our thoughts for no reason

Has it been decreed in her constitution,  
She, [Amrika], mistress of the world,  
In Hebrew... that she should humble [us] Al Arab?

Has it been decreed that each time a ruler in Amrika wants to win the presidency that he should kill us...  
We Al Arab?

We waited for one Arab to come pull this thorny prick from our necks  
A single Don Quixote  
A single Qabbaya, for whom they did not shave the moustache

We waited for a Khalid... A Tariq... or Antara...  
We were eaten Tharhara (while engaged in vain talk)

They sent a fax  
We read its text  
[Way] after paying tribute and the end of the Majzara (slaughter)...

What does Yisrael fear from our cries?  
What does she fear from our faxes?

The Jihad of the fax is the weakest of jihads...  
It is a single text we write for all the martyrs who left... and all the martyrs those who will come

What does Yisrael fear from Ibn al Muqaffa?



Qana remembered

Jarir and... Farazdaq?

And Khansa throwing her poems at the gates of the Maqbara (cemetery)  
What does she fear if we burn tires

Sign communiques  
And destroy shops  
And she knows that we have never been kings of Harb (war)  
But were kings of Tharhara (wild belching)

What does Yisrael fear from the beating of the drums the tearing of clothes and the scratching of Khulud (checks as in mourning, as in Ancient Arabia)

What does she fear [when she hears] the stories of 'Ad and Thamud?

We are in national ivresse  
We did not receive  
Since the times of conquest... the Barid

Letters from the Umara Al-Fath—Amirs of Conquest—that such land has been conquered.  
We are a people made of

dough  
The more Yisrael increases in her killing and terrorism the more we increase in idleness and Burud (coldness)

A smothering dominion  
A regional dialect that increases in ugliness  
and a green union that grows in isolation  
Summer trees, growing barren and borders... whenever the whim strikes  
crase other borders

Yisrael should slaughter us, and why not?  
She should crase Hisham, Ziyad and ar-Rashid, and why not?

[Why not?] and the Banu Taghlab lusting after their women  
[Why not?] and Banu Mazen lusting after their ghilman (slave boys)  
[Why not?] and Banu Adnan dropping their trousers to their knees  
debating... necking and... the lips! ■

## Letters to the Editor Oil needs democracy

To The Editor,

In an article titled "Bringing Iran back into American fold" by S. Rob Sobhani (The Star, June 21, 1996) the author recommended that the United States try to ship oil from the Central Asian Republics to western markets via Iran to help the clerical regime financially instead of boycotting the Mullahs' regime. This, the author argued, would prevent "chaos" stemming from an economic crisis which would in the end only favor the People's Mojahedin as the only organized resistance in the country.

Allow us to make the following points for the benefit of your esteemed readers:  
First, the author is recommending a policy of appeasement vis a vis the mullahs in Tehran.

He brazenly argues in favor of giving in to the clerical rulers' blackmail, whereas:

■ This regime has executed 100,000 people in Iran since 1981 on purely political charges.

■ A complete list of names and particulars of more than 16,000 of them has been published by the People's Mojahedin of Iran. This regime has enforced unprecedented social repression against women, the intelligentsia, religious and ethnic minorities and all sections of Iranian society.

■ It has been condemned 37 times by various organs of the United Nations including the Human Rights Commission and the General Assembly for continuing grave violation of Iranian citizens' rights and for exporting terrorism abroad.

■ It has planned, and carried out 215 terrorist operations against Iranian opposition figures abroad, eliminating 11 dissidents during the first five months of 1996 alone. Its officials have been prosecuted in France and Switzerland and are currently being tried in Germany, Italy and Turkey on charges of liquidation of their political opponents.

■ This regime has got a unique record of interference in the internal affairs of other countries and of exporting terrorism to the Gulf.

■ It has a proclaimed policy of sabotaging the Middle-East peace process.

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Appeasing policies such as the policy of critical dialogue will continue to be futile. The only way is to exercise decisiveness, and impose an arms, trade and diplomatic embargo against this regime through binding resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

Second, the mullahs' regime is engulfed in numerous economic, social and political crises, isolated both in Iran and the international level. A three figure inflation rate, foreign debts amounting to nearly 50 billion dollars, the participation of less than 10% of the Iranian people in the recent elections for parliament, as the international news agencies reported and Tehran-based diplomats testified, have made the mullahs "short of breath," "divided" and "deeply hated." With a "disintegrated" system, it has "no way out of the impasse."

Third, the People's Mojahedin of Iran form the backbone of the Iranian resistance—the National Council of Resistance of Iran. This parliament in exile comprises 560 members. On 21 June, the very same day the article was published in your

weekly, on the commemoration day of martyrs and political prisoners in Iran, 25,000 Iranians gathered in London's Earl's Court Olympiad to listen to a speech by Mrs Maryam Rajavi, the President-elect of the NCR. The six-hour gathering and the speech titled "Women, voice of the oppressed" was broadcast live via satellite to Iran, the Middle East, Europe and the United States. The Iranian Resistance enjoys the public support of more than 1700 members of parliaments in Europe and of the United States Congress.

Fourth, the Iranian people's resistance has an announced program for free elections in Iran within six months from the downfall of the regime. Any popular and responsible successor regime in post-clerical Iran faces a momentous task of reconstruction in a country devastated by years of war. All resources—human and material—of the country should be mobilized to this end in post-mullahs Iran. ■

Press office of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, Washington DC.

## Middle East Beat by Khairi Janbek

## Erbakan

AFTER A long delay Mr Erbakan assumes power as the new Premier of Turkey. Under the gaze of Kemal Ataturk, Refah mustered enough votes to become the final arbiter in Turkish politics.

Rather than wait for a hypothetical majority, settling meanwhile in the political wilderness, Mr Erbakan chose to share power with Mrs Tansu Ciller, the incumbent prime minister in the coalition. She also found it more convenient to be in the government than put up with the impending charges of corruption laid by Mr Yilmaz.

It is not surprising for Mr Erbakan to have become the coalition partner of Mrs Ciller. The late President Ozal had started the courtship between his True Path party and Mr Erbakan's Refah much earlier on.

It was during his first presidential team, that Refah started expanding its social base, and power structure. Giving the secular structure of the state, a moderate Islamic content had served the country well during the challenges with political organizations of leftist and rightist orientations that threatened Kemalist Turkey in the eighties.

The Turkish army, the traditionalist embodiment of Ataturk's vision had watched the growth of the unofficial links between the Sufism of Mr Ozal and the Islamic political tacticians of Refah. While the late president dealt with the likes of the World Bank and IMF, Refah softened the blows with its effective social action programs, and religious education.

The legacy of this cooperation still continues even now, for it looks closely at the division of power, defense and foreign affairs have gone Ciller's way. Perhaps there are things that Mr Erbakan wishes to shape in his own vision, but we must not delude ourselves: the Premier is not part of a long chain of an Islamic conspiracy against the world, but rather a peculiarly Turkish phenomenon was mustered up during different times and for different purposes, to combat communism, and religious extremism.

Mr Erbakan has made it clear that his country as a Muslim one, should improve its relations with the neighboring Islamic states. But Turkey has always been Islamic, and improving relations depends on the political will rather than subscribing to "a priority" religious affiliation.

The new premier is governed by many political and economic imperatives that are not of his own making. His conciliatory political remarks, albeit circumscribed, will not be checked by the military but rather by circumstances.

Turkey as a candidate member of the EU and partner in Nato immediately chains Mr Erbakan to a long history, which may not be incidentally too inconvenient. For it gets him of the hook when it comes to the future relations with Iraq. Greek's influence in the EU and NATO, when it comes to the Cypriot question.

The other problems of the Middle East, mainly water and the strategic alliance with Israel, may prove to be thorny for the Premier, but by and large they are issues related to the vision and image that the Turkish states is promoting about itself.

Still, Mr Erbakan is expected to be successful in the field he is most accustomed with: the domestic front. He is expected to do well in expanding the base of social services, tackle corruption and provide for the well-being of the citizen. On the Kurdish front, he may prove to be more conciliatory than his predecessors who have pushed the war under various ideologies and objectives. In foreign relations, his only safe quarter, and ironically which could turn out a winner for him, is the determined approach towards the Muslim Republics, which will gain Ankara the support and sympathy of its kin, and undermine the Iranian influence in that part of the world. ■



18 JULY  
Middle East  
by Khairi Jass  
Erbak

Business scene

The World Bank granted Jordan a \$20 million to finance the Jordan Company for Mortgage Refinance. Shareholders include the Central Bank of Jordan, the Arab Bank and the Social Security Corp. Its activity will start within six months. The company aims at developing the market for housing finance, through loans and for Banks and other financial establishments. The company also plans to promote the capital market in Jordan through offering medium- and long-term loans and create new investment mechanisms to attract more Islamic investments and housing aids.

A public shareholding investment company was recently established at JD 15 million. Named Petra for Tourism and Touristic Investments, it aims at building hotels. The first will be a first class hotel in Jabal Amman, named the Four Seasons at about \$40 million. It will open in 1999. The company's founders are the Arab-Jordan Investment Bank, the Saudi investor Prince Al Walid bin Talal. Four seasons Hotel Co., and the Arab-Jordan Investment Corp., Mr. Hani Al Qadi, Mr. Hisham Al Qadumi, Mr. Ghassan Al Mifleh. They paid half of the capital (JD 7.5 million); the remainder is offered for public subscription.

Jordan Press Co., "Al Rai" recorded profits at JD 637.8 thousand in the first half of this year and its revenues reached JD 4.4 million. Its budget is JD 13.5 million.

Profits of the Jordan Financial Investment Co., were approximately JD 47.5 thousand during the first half of this year, its revenues for the same period are JD 101.5 thousand. The company's mid-annual report reveals that its real estate investments reached JD 2.3 million, its paid-up capital is JD 6.44 million over the same period. It was established in 1994.

Jordan National Insurance Co., is to distribute dividends of 15%. In response to recommendations from its board of directors who will hold their annual meeting next August.

Approval is given to extend the public subscription period of the shares of the International Group for Hotels Union until 5. August. The group, which has a paid up capital of JD 17 million, plans to build the Amman Hilton.

Government defends itself by its positive economic record

AMMAN (Star)—Despite being under attack for the bread intention, the Kabarti government has achieved quite a lot in the short period since its formation last February. On the economic scene, it achieved a number of things. Since it has come to power, the government aimed at improving the general economic climate, achieving monetary stability, reducing the budget deficit and reducing the debt burden.

Jordan's economy is ranked 28 among the 49 top competitive states in terms of economic standards, the annual report of the International Economic Foundation points out.

Jordan also had received

additional aid from the World Bank estimated at one billion dollar to resume its economic reform program. The Kabarti government is doing its best to maintain a GDP growth rate of six percent and cut the budget deficit by almost 2.5 percent in 1998. Moreover, it plans to cut the deficit in the current account of balance of payment by 2.8%.

Observers say it took many steps to control inflation and reduce indebtedness by protecting the value of the dinar against other currencies and convert its debts with donations, loans and other financial investments.

The conversion of debts is

being negotiated with Switzerland, Belgium, Spain, Finland and France. It is hoped that these debts would be converted into investments.

The Kabarti government is seeking contacts with the British and American governments for further investments and loans at favorable conditions to reduce the interest rates on debts and support the balance of payment.

The government launched a strategy of privatization as it is the case with the Royal Jordanian and the Telecommunication Corp. Contacts are being made with the World Bank to finance a project to make Aqaba a Free trade area. The

government endorsed contracts and economic agreements with Japan, the World Bank and the European Union to finance development projects at favorable conditions.

Concern was also given to tourism sector, by inaugurating new agencies at Frankfurt, Paris, and New York to increase Jordan's revenues from foreign currencies. New hotels were built in addition to improving archaeological sites in Rum, Um Qayas and Petra.

As for the electric sector, the government endorsed a law to convert the Electricity Authority into a public shareholding company and develop electric power stations in rural areas. In addition it signed agreements with American firms to construct a station for storing liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Other economic achievements of the Kabarti government over the last five months, covered transport developments, agricultural projects, communication networks, water and irrigation tenders, training skillful and competent employees and social development aids and allocations for



Kabarti

the low-income families. Furthermore, the Kabarti government put forward drafts for economic, investment and customs laws to be submitted to the Cabinet for ratification before the end of August.

Philadelphia Bank boosts its capital to JD 20 million

AMMAN (Star)—The general assembly of the Philadelphia Investment Bank approved a merger to increase its paid-up capital from JD 10 million to JD 20 million. This may also be due to the losses it incurred at over JD 2 million in 1995.

However, the prospects for the bank looks bright. The chairman of the Bank, Mr. Issa Al Qazemi said that the Bank's assets were up by JD 310 million in 1995. It increased by about JD 60 million compared with JD 57 million in 1994. It also recorded a rise of 10% in interest and commission. Saving deposits went up 265%, as a result of the Bank's strategy in concentrating on individual deposits.

New departments became operational last year. These include the departments of Marketing, Crediting and Follow-up. The management developed its banking operations, clearance and computer section.

The decline in the price shares on the Amman Financial Market was the cause for the increase in the Bank's profits. Mr. Qazemi said. However, he pointed to the increasing annual expenses of fixed assets of JD 180,893 of 1995 compared with 1994. This is due to operating new computer systems to improve performance and reduce administrative expenses in future.

The increase of branches also led to hike in operation and capital expenses, he added.

The Banks accumulated losses were JD 2,604,592 in 1995 against JD 1,362,601 in 1994.

Total shareholders' rights were JD 7,558,617 compared with JD 8,653,349 in 1994.

Over all, the banking system in Jordan is experiencing major growth rates.

Goldstar expands to Saudi Arabia in a big way

THE MIDDLE East Engineering Industries (GoldStar) is well-known for its distinguished economic activity in Jordan. After examining Goldstar's strong financial position on the Amman Financial Market, Saudi investor, Mr. Dawood Al Bassam bought two million of the company's shares last week.

Mr. Al Bassam said that he and his regional partner in Jordan, Dr. Mashhour Khalafat that they will promote Goldstar's products in coordination with the Goldstar's board headed by Mr. Mustafa Darwish Al-Khalili. They will also open new branches and agencies in Middle Asia, the former Soviet Union, Romania, Bul-

garia and some Arab states.

Mr. Al Bassam added that GoldStar will train personnel at the above mentioned countries for needed maintenance and the provision of spareparts for Goldstar products.

Mr. Al Bassam said Saudi Arabia will be a big market for Goldstar and would seek to establish company's branches all over the Kingdom.

Goldstar was established in 1994 and is recording a remarkable increase in activities and sales volume that was up during the first half of this year by 15% compared with the same period last year.

Business delegation to Iraq calls for greater regional development

AMMAN (Star)—A Jordanian delegation has just come back from a visit in Iraq. It was in a response to an invitation by the Iraqi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Iraqi Minister of Trade, Mohammad Mahdi Saleh and the Minister of Industry and Minerals, Adnan Al Ani. The Jordanian delegation was headed by the chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry, Khaldoun Abu Hassan.

Members of the delegation carried with them to the Iraqi people a package containing drugs, vegetable oil and some foodstuff materials.

During their meetings, the Jordanian and Iraqi participants confirmed the strategic relations between the two countries and their future prospects, particularly after the implementation of the oil-for-food formula.

Mr. Saleh affirmed that Iraq would not deny Jordan's stand and support to Iraq, and added that priority in tenders and projects would be given to Jordanian industries, putting into consideration factors of quality and price. Any deal will be subject to the approval of the UN.

The volume of commercial exchange between the two



Jordanian delegation with their Iraqi counterparts

countries is \$220 million. Mr. Abu Hassan said that the Aqaba port is fully prepared to receive goods required by Iraq. The land transit sector in Jordan is ready to meet any

expected demand, he added. Moreover, other procedures are being carried out on the borders, including more flexible performance and competitive delivery fares and fees, Mr. Khaldoun assured.

Mr. Saleh spoke about "hot international competition" on the Iraqi market, particularly from Turkey and Indonesia. However, priority will be given to Jordanian products if they prove competitive with their offers.

Easy procedures, geographical proximity and easy transport would put Jordan in a favorable position. Mr. Saleh called on Jordanian investors and industrial companies not to lose the opportunity with regards to the Iraqi market.

The two sides agreed that the coming stage will witness great prosperity in joint commercial and economic ventures. They also plan to strengthen cooperation in the field of health. The first shipment of Jordanian drugs will coincide with the first shipment of Iraqi oil exports.

To cover the local, regional and international economic requirements, the two sides agreed to discuss with the respective ministries of the two countries, the possibility of establishing a customs union between Jordan and Iraq to simplify procedures and facilitate cargo movement. They agreed to revive the concept of the Arab joint market to activate economic exchanges and ensure the movement of capital among Arab states.

Cooperation between the Jordanian and Iraqi sides cover also exchange of economic conferences, seminars and research.

Jordanian manufacturers are expected to participate in the Baghdad International Exhibition that is due next November.

USAIR and Deutsche BA begin code share agreement

USAIR and German airline, Deutsche BA have begun code sharing flights to Berlin and Dusseldorf.

Under the agreement, passengers would fly on USAIR between the US and Munich and on a Deutsche BA between Munich and either Berlin or Dusseldorf using the USAIR ticket designator.

"This code share agreement furthers our plan to increase our international presence through growth and partnership," said USAIR president Rakesh Gangwal. "It is a natural complement to USAIR's new service between Philadelphia and Munich."

Passengers on the code share flights would receive convenient one-stop shopping for reservations and fares, joint frequent traveller

program benefits, and coordinated flight schedules.

Code sharing is a system by which two carriers coordinate flights under a mutual flight number to simplify connecting service. The airlines tightly coordinate schedules giving passengers convenient flight connections without lengthy layovers.

With a USAIR ticket, passengers will enjoy one-time check in seat assignments, boarding passes at the first departure point and automatic transfer of baggage.

USAIR operates more than 4800 jet and express flights daily and is the largest carrier in the eastern United States. It sources about 70 percent of the US originating traffic to Europe.

Alcatel's new mobile phones are latest on market

AMMAN (Star)—Alcatel is a leading French mobile phone company that has recently introduced its mobile telephone systems in Jordan. Mr. George Le Planche, the marketing manager of Alcatel in the region was in Amman last week to launch the system in Jordan.

Alcatel is the authorized distributor for Alcatel mobile phones in Jordan. Mr. Sylvain Dolla, sales manager for Alcatel Middle East also attended.

Alcatel Telecom has introduced two new GSM terminals: the HC800 and HC1000. They were introduced in the Middle East last month. An Arabic version of the product will be available during this month.

Both HC800 and HC1000 are pocket sized and present a large graphic display screen, icons, the One-Touch direct access keys and a navigator to bring a unique, intuitive, user interface. The technology and advanced features of the HC800 and HC1000 come tightly packed in an extra-light, ultra slim size which fits comfortably in the hand—and a shirt pocket.

Battery life has also been enhanced. From 55 minutes talk time to 21 hours standby time with the super Li-Ion battery up to 130 minutes and 46 hours with the super power NMH battery. A special feature of the Alcatel HC1000 is the integrated vibrator. This enables the user to replace the audible ring



Le Planche (right), and Mr. Dolla during a press conference

by a vibration, avoiding disturbance during meetings.

The HC800 and HC1000 give easy and immediate access to all the terminals' features through the unique direct access navigation concept with soft keys and the very user friendly navigation key. There is also "home" key to take the user back to the standby. And if he/she should be unsure of how to invoke a particular feature, a user manual is built in with a full set of help messages, that appear on the high focus LED screen, accommodating five lines of 15 characters. This focus on user-friendliness responds to the key requirements of a mobile terminal—after speech and reception quality.

The Alcatel HC800 and HC1000 is also a variable organizer with:

■ Two product directories (2 x 50 data sheets including information such as address, fax number) in addition to the SIM directory (up to 100 names and numbers).

■ A four-function calculator.

■ Time, date, appointment reminder.

■ easy, direct access to the international access code table.

In addition, a programmable key enables the user or a user set - i.e., a company providing its staff or customers with the terminal - to add tailor-made functions.

Tunisair provides quality at lower cost

AMMAN (Star)—The Regional director of Tunisair in Amman, Mr. Husni bin Said praised the generosity and kindness of Jordanian people in this country.

"I am doing my best to consolidate our relations with Jordan on the cultural, technical and touristic fields," Mr. Bin Said pointed out. He said although tourist fares from Jordan to Tunisia were initially high, they were later cut by 50%.

He also called hotels in Tunisia to offer Jordanians cheaper prices and good services. This will encourage cooperation between the two countries in the tourism field.

Mr. Bin Said said Tunisia has wonderful scenes, and fascinating natural views and a unique



Bin Said

example of Arab civilization. Its climate is attractive as temperatures are normally (22-30). "Along the sea coasts you can

sit and enjoy yourself when watching the view of the blue sky mixed with green forests and the aroma of Jasmine, oranges, lemon and rose," Mr. Bin Said continued.

There are two famous cities along the coast: "Susa" and "Al Mansuri", that are very active, full of entertainment facilities and markets.

The number of tourists reached six million in 1995 which is a big number that indicates the beauty and charm of Tunisia.

Asked about tourist visas to country, Mr. Bin Said said "we are trying to make the procedure easier for the benefit and comfort of tourists."

MARKET WATCH 13-16 JULY

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<div>▲ Amman Investment Bank 6.06</div> <div>▲ United Land Development 5.36</div> <div>▲ Middle East Complex</div>	<div>▲ Arab Financial Investment 5.17</div> <div>▲ Middle East Complex 5.08</div> <div>▲ United Engineering 4.26</div>	<div>▲ Arab Saving Bank 5.11</div> <div>▲ Jordan Industry Resource 5.34</div> <div>▲ Middle East Complex 4.84</div>	<div>▲ International Trade 5.77</div> <div>▲ Arab Medical Supplies 5.45</div> <div>▲ Housing Bank 5.00</div>
<div>▲ Albia Trade Centers 4.35</div> <div>▲ Universal Mineral Industries 3.83</div> <div>▲ Arab Potash 0.59</div>	<div>▲ General Central Storage 4.92</div> <div>▲ National Cable 4.82</div> <div>▲ Jar' T. Textile Manu 4.55</div>	<div>▲ National Cable 5.06</div> <div>▲ General Central Storage 5.17</div> <div>▲ Arab Medical Supplies 5.17</div>	<div>▲ Amman Investment Bank 5.88</div> <div>▲ Albia Trade Centers 5.00</div> <div>▲ Industrial Commercial 4.02</div>
General Price Pointer 137,890	137,440	137,710	137,920
Trade Volume 1696715	712523	713698	1051030
Stock Volume 837783	676788	567823	2008126
Highest Traded Stocks			
▲ Housing Bank 1,119,276	▲ Intermediate Industry 52,328	▲ National Cables 337,263	▲ Dar Ad-Dawa 697,949

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

Major biological companies have eye on Jordan

SOUTHPORT—BioKePharm, Inc., a US-based company, and Gruppo Marucci, a European leader in biological products, based in Italy, are to merge forming a global health care company devoted to the research, development, manufacturing and marketing of biological health care products.

It is the latest strategic alliance between America and a Europe in the competitive biologicals business. The new company, which will retain the name, BioKePharm, Inc., has aggressive plans for rapid expansion in Jordan and many other major and emerging international markets, according to Ralph M. Galustian, the founder of BioKePharm, and Guccio Marucci, the founder and chairman of Gruppo Marucci. The company's goal is to become one of the top three leaders in the industry by the year 2000.

With worldwide industry shortages of plasma-derived products and annual market growth forecasts of 20 percent

over the next four years, BioKePharm announced production expansion of 100 percent of approximately 2.1 million litres, by 2000. Estimated company sales for 1996 are \$165 million.

BioKePharm's product line includes a wide range of plasma-derived products to meet therapeutic needs of patients worldwide. The three principal products are anti-hemophilic factors, albumin used in the treatments of shock, trauma and burn victims, and intravenous immune globulin, which is used in a number of immune deficiencies.

Gruppo Marucci entered the biological products industry during the 1960s with the purchase of a company in Pisa. The company has been a leading provider of biological products in Italy, the second largest market in Europe, and to customers in Jordan and other countries of the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. The company's products are registered in Jordan and 345 other countries.

Siemens supplies mobile radio to Oman

The Siemens Public Communication Networks Group has received an order from the state telecom provider GTO (General Telecom Organization) in Oman for installation of a turnkey mobile radio network.

The contract, which has now been signed, covers planning, delivery, installation and commissioning of switching equipment and base stations for the digital mobile radio network complying with the GSM-standard (Global System for Mobile Communication). The order is worth around DM 33 million.

The first stage will involve provision of mobile communications for the capital Muscat, followed in succession by the other regions. The first section of the network will go into operation in November 1996 and by the end of 1997 the entire network will have been completed. The network will then provide mobile telephones to around 50,000 of the 1.6 million inhabitants of Oman.

Siemens has received orders for GSM mobile radio networks from 63 network providers in 49 countries throughout the world.



# Palestine Post

## Palestinian Stock Exchange due next month

A Palestinian Stock Exchange will start operations next August in Nablus city. The exact date for the launch is awaiting ratification from the Ministry of Finance in the PNA.

The Stock Exchange is a joint venture between the Palestinian Development and Investment Co. (PAD-ICO) and "Samid," an economic cooperative which is affiliated to the PLO.

Mr Safwan Batayneh, the director of the financial market, said the exchange is established to attract the investments of Palestinian expatriates who are still hesitant to invest their money in the self-rule areas of Gaza and the West Bank.

However, Palestinian economists are expressing their fears from the right-wing radical policy that is adopted by Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

But Mr Batayneh said "we can't ignore the results of the Israeli elections, but the financiers are committed to their obligations and should not be affected by Netanyahu."

The Stock Exchange is built on an area of 1200 square meters in Nablus which is expected to be the commercial capital of the self-rule territories.

Contracts are signed with Canadian technicians and experts for the furniture of the premises of the Stock market together with providing modernized telecommunication networks and computerized systems.

Mr Batayneh, who worked at the Wall Street exchange and was economic advisor to five Jordanian prime ministers, expects companies with a 500,000 dollars to be listed on the exchange.

The volume of trading at the Stock Exchange is expected to reach \$60 million annually over the first two years, then it rises to the normal level by the end of the decade.

Brokerage companies are expected to reach 15 in the first two years after inauguration.

Mr Batayneh is seeking co-operation with Palestinian directors and experts to help in the management of the Stock market, which he said will provide 500 job opportunities.

## Banking system set up but under threat

The governor of the Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA), Dr Fuad Bseiso announced the completion of the basis for establishing a Palestinian banking system. This is in spite of Israeli meddling and obstructing the movement of PNA employees.

In one year, we were able to lay down the legal and organizational aspects related to the licensing of banks and the supervising of their financial activities, Dr Fuad added. He said that this is in keeping with the sound financial policy of the PNA.

Licenses were given to eight national banks in the self-rule areas. Plans are being made to establish a National Fund for Development and Reconstruction, one that can provide long-term finance for operating banks in Palestine.

The monetary authority is doing its best to manage the financial market. At present, it is also modernizing its mechanisms to be able to carry out its duty as a Central Bank for the Palestinians.

He said that there are many difficulties that face the authority. The most important is the restriction on movement between the West Bank and Gaza and between Palestine and outside world.

Such Israeli frustration has increased that the PMA had to turn to the World Bank for arbitration, but so far this has proved ineffective.

## Tourism in Jericho

More and more tourists are flocking to Jericho, of all places. The normally sleepy town should feel very happy about that. The number of tourists to the city reached 188,623 in the first half of this year compared with 178,800 in the same period last year.

Revenues from the tourist sector increased by 115,000 shekels to 940,485 shekels in 1996 compared with 825,294 shekels in the same period in 1995.

Tourism to this city increased by eight percent. Officials say that this is due to stability in the city, the existence of archaeological, Islamic and religious sites.

The Director of Tourism in Jericho, Mr Hamza Al Samadi said that a project is being under study to build a tourist town at a cost of \$150 million. Further projects are being studied to encourage local tourism, maintain archaeological sites and improve hotel services at Jericho.

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Batayneh

# Yasser Arafat of the PNA State repression in era of peace building

David Hirst

THE FIRST person I saw on arriving in Gaza was a Hamas supporter whom I had met in south Lebanon, to where he and 400 other Islamists were deported by Israel in 1993. I was lucky to find him, he said, since he had just spent 10 days in jail.

"I run a non-governmental organisation (NGO), and like others in such charity business, I'm a target for Arafat's crooks. I had to stand for 24 hours, hands above my head. They blindfolded us and made us play football in the corridors; we ran into each other and the walls. They reckoned I had \$50,000 to spare and said: 'if you don't pay up, we'll send you to the State Security Court. You'll rot in jail, because you are stupid.' I paid; my family sold their gold. They accuse me of being a thief, and take the lot themselves."

But the Hamas man really is a "very big thief", said one of Yasser Arafat's ministers. "I asked Hamas leaders themselves, and they said that \$50,000 was peanuts for him."

Then with a disabused frankness one often finds in the Palestinian president's oldest companions, he went on: "[Mr Arafat] corrupted a whole society with money. Can you imagine him without it now? He's short of it, so he has to use illegal ways."

The charge and counter-charge in this case reflect a general condition in Gaza today and those parts of the West Bank where Mr Arafat's Palestinian Authority rules.

Here we have a victim of the authority asserting that Mr Arafat detains, maltreats or tortures his own citizens, not merely to control, but to rob them—and a minister of that authority conceding the allegations are basically true.

One hears it on all hands: coercion and cash, extortion and patronage lie at the heart of Mr Arafat's state-in-the-making.

Whether the president ever

has a fully-fledged state depends far more on Israel and the US than himself, but the signs are that, if he did, it would end up as just another unsavory Middle Eastern dictatorship.

There are signs too that of Mr Arafat's "partners" in peace, the Israelis would actively encourage him in this enterprise, the Americans would support what the Israelis want, and the rest of the world, however uneasy, would turn a blind eye.

No place on earth now falls under such scrutiny as tiny, squalid, hitherto neglected Gaza but, as the crucible of the peace process, no place enjoys such immunity from official criticism.

Take Mr Arafat's security forces. There are, of course, other key institutions in his emerging polity, notably an elected council. But the pre-eminence of police and intelligence was guaranteed from the outset because security—Israel's, not the Palestinians'—was the be-all and end-all of the Oslo peace accord.

A strong police force was one of the few unequivocal prerogatives the Palestinian Authority was granted, one domain where Mr Arafat had a virtual carte blanche from the outset. Let them "rule by their own methods", said the late Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin.

Mr Arafat the state-builder has applied exactly the same methods as Mr Arafat the former revolutionary, the first being expansion and proliferation at any price. Under the Oslo accord, a maximum of 12,000 policemen were to constitute the only Palestinian security force. Officially, there are now at least 33,000 "security" men but, given Mr Arafat's congenial distaste for facts and figures, there could be 40,000 to 50,000 of them, according to Western diplomats.

As for security organisations—there are up to 10, and more if one counts the organisations that spring up within

organisations.

At every stage, Israel and the US have encouraged, blessed or accepted the phenomenal growth of these instruments of repression. But for Amnesty International, the State Security Court "violates the most basic, minimum international standards for fair trials and fundamental human rights."

For the US vice-president, Al Gore, such charges are "misplaced". For him, and all US spokesmen, only the "war on terror" seems to count.

None of the security forces has any official existence under the Oslo accord, or even under the Palestinian National Authority itself.

They act as autonomous agencies, without hierarchy, chain of command or defined responsibility. They compete with one another. All they have in common is their subordination to one man. Mr Arafat, who, playing one against the other, perpetuates his control.

But some have a strong, potentially superior, allegiance to the Israelis, notably the most sinister of them, the Preventative Security Forces, a home to former collaborators which monitors political opposition to the peace accord. They have their own prisons, perhaps 17 in Gaza alone.

"But you just can't keep count because they are opening new ones all the time, if it is only a couple of apartments here or there" said a human rights activist.

As for prison-

ers held without trial, the human rights activist did not know how many there were. Around 700 in Gaza, he thought. Most were Hamas activists or sympathizers with a sprinkling of journalists, politicians, preachers or academics who fall foul of the authority, and of late, men of means who are likely sources of finance.

"The newest detention centre I heard of is one for businessmen who cheat on VAT and their tax returns. Naturally, the security people have more to gain by dealing with them

selves than sending them for trial," he said.

Rival organisations stake out areas of economic activity: General Intelligence has the NGOs, Preventative Security has commercial enterprises in general.

"I hear," said another minister, "that the Border Police used to demand 1,000 shekels for lorries to get to the front of the queue at the Israeli crossing, and that now you even have to pay to join the police."

Then there are the so-called monopolies. The Palestinians import most of their raw materials, including petrol, flour, cement and gravel from Israel. With protection from the security forces, shadowy economic "advisers" have exclusive control of these. The proceeds go partly into their own pockets, partly into Mr Arafat's.

There is an official, transparent budget which the PNA shows the world, and a very unofficial, hidden one known only to Mr Arafat, a few of his henchmen and perhaps the Israelis.

It is with the second budget, and the power of patronage it provides, that Mr Arafat buys loyalties he cannot otherwise guarantee. It is vital.

The confusion between patronage and control, security and finance is not, however, confined to individuals and elite. It pervades the whole of society.

It is through his over grown public sector, where between half and two-thirds of the jobs are security-related, that the PNA has made itself by far the largest employer in Gaza.

"This is basically a very law-abiding society," said a diplomat. "Does Arafat really

need one policeman to every 50 citizens, compared with Los Angeles with one to every 2,000?"

There are many good-willed people in Gaza who want the Oslo accord to succeed and who think success will come through two things. The first, further progress in the peace process, is hardly in Palestinian hands. The second, the building of an honest, efficient, democratic, law-based polity.

But they fear that Mr Arafat is falling drastically short of expectations, using his security services as the main yardstick.

There is the sheer oppression, the corruption in the service of oppression, that frequently produces angry denunciations, like the following from an inmate of Israeli prisons for 17 years who now fears that he will have a taste of Mr Arafat's "I never imagined there would be a time when people started saying that the occupation was better. But it is one thing to be imprisoned, beaten or robbed by your enemy. It is far more demoralizing to suffer the same from your own liberators."

There is the sheer scale of the police force. That itself militates against loyalty and efficiency. Most who join are infected by the mood of the people, and the people are more and more inclined to lump Mr Arafat and the Israelis together as the source of their woes. They join only because the economy is so bad. And most sense that it is bad not just because of the disastrous consequences of Israel's retaliation against Hamas suicide bombers, but because Mr Arafat's huge, incompetent and corrupt bureaucracy is a drain on funds which, under the accord, should be devoted to productive investment and the generation of income and jobs.

"In my view," this is again a minister speaking, "Arafat risks hanging by his own rope. Either the Israelis will remove him when his time is up through the lobby he has let them acquire in the security services or the whole lot will join the people in the next intifada against both him and the Israelis."

Reports say that Mr Arafat lost his cool and stormed at the consul in much the same way he does with his elected council. "But you never used to tell me about human rights before!"

Guardian

# Britain sues Iraq over its £400m debt

THE BRITISH government has launched a High Court battle against Iraq in an attempt to recover hundreds of millions of pounds of loans made to Iraq before the Gulf war.

Britain's Export Credit Guarantees Department (ECGD) has persuaded Midland, Barclays, National Westminster banks and nine other lenders to issue 25 writs claiming more than £400 million.

The credit provided by the British banks to Iraq included several loans destined to support Iraq's military machine in the period running up to the Gulf war.

Loans were made to the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Military Manufacturing as well as the Ministry of Heavy Industries, Ministry of Transport and Communication, and Ministry of Water and Sewerage. Other loans went to construction projects and oil programs.

The writs to recover the money were filed in the High Court against the relevant Iraqi state departments and the Central Bank of Iraq, which had guaranteed the repayment of loans made by Midland. Most of the loans were made in the late 1980s before Iraq invaded Kuwait, and fell due in 1992.

The loans were made by the banks to help Iraq pay for the British goods it required. British ministers were sufficiently eager for the trade to bring in the ECGD to underwrite it.

The litigation was initiated at the end of May, when ECGD officials together with Clyde & Co. the law firm, met the British lenders and encouraged them to sue.

One banker, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "This is being driven by the

ECGD on behalf of the government. The ECGD decided it wanted to pursue a claim over the outstanding loan arrears."

The scale of the loans to Iraq is so large that it has become Britain's third-biggest debtor, after Nigeria and Brazil. Nigeria owes £1.7 billion, Brazil £677 million. Iraq in total is thought to owe the ECGD about £500 million.

An ECGD spokesman confirmed the banks had offloaded the risk and would not face losses. He said: "We provided guarantees to the British banks that put up the loans, so they are off the hook in a sense. The banks have been paid back most of their money now. It is up to the ECGD to recover the loans."

The litigation has been brought to conform with British law on debt recovery.

Under the Statute of Limitation, creditors can seek to recover debts after six years have elapsed only if they have embarked on the legal process before the time limit.

The ECGD spokesman said: "We are putting down a marker that legal action has started to recover the money and the banks have issued the writs on our behalf."

The two biggest lenders to Iraq during this period were Midland and Morgan Grenfell. Midland is suing the Central Bank of Iraq for £121 million plus interest; the Baghdad Transit Authority and the Central Bank for £833,000; and with Barclays, NatWest and others it is seeking £55 million plus interest of £12 million from the Ministry of Industry and Military Manufacturing.

Morgan Grenfell is involved in actions against the Central Bank for nearly £50 million

plus interest. It is also suing the Ministry of Transport and Communication, the Ministry of Heavy Industries, the Ministry of Housing and Construction and the Ministry of Oil.

The other banks involved in

the litigation are Royal Bank of Scotland, Clydesdale Bank, Standard Chartered, Banque Paribas, Gulf International Bank, Arab Banking Corporation, British Arab Commercial Bank and Bank of Kuwait.



# Saudis move beyond one-industry economy

By John Lancaster  
LA Times-Washington Post  
News Service

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia—Hired to upgrade Saudi Arabia's phone system, the American telecommunications giant AT&T Corp. is stockpiling electronic switches with an unusual feature: a label that says "Made in Saudi Arabia."

The switches are rolling off the automated high-tech assembly lines of Advanced Electronics Co., a joint venture of Boeing Corp. and Saudi investors.

The company, which also manufactures defense components, was formed under a government program aimed at diversifying Saudi Arabia's oil-based economy and creating jobs for Saudi citizens.

"One typical stereotype is that Saudis don't like to work with their hands," said company president Abdel Aziz Suqair, an energetic man in flowing Arab headgear who has engineering degrees from the University of London and the University of California at Davis. "Well, have a look downstairs."

While oil and foreign labor still drive the Saudi economy, the story of Advanced Electronics suggests that government efforts to develop a non-oil manufacturing base—and a competent Saudi work force—have started to bear

fruit.

Fifteen years ago oil accounted for perhaps 80 percent of Saudi Arabia's gross domestic product, according to the Finance Ministry. Oil now makes up a third of it, with the rest split between government spending and the private sector (although oil still accounts for 70 percent of government spending). Last year non-oil exports jumped by 45 percent.

While the Saudi manufacturing sector is dominated by petrochemicals and plastics—classified as non-oil products even though oil is the basic ingredient in both—Saudi and joint-venture companies also make processed foods, pharmaceuticals, toothpaste, cleaning products and other consumer goods.

Overall, the number of new licenses granted to Saudi industrial ventures jumped from 30 in 1991 to 600 last year, according to a Western embassy.

There is some urgency to the government's quest. Lower oil prices have forced it to cut spending sharply, including subsidies for the middle class. Per-capita income has fallen from \$21,000 in 1981, at the peak of the oil boom, to \$6,700; it is expected to "continue its long-term decline," according to the latest economic report by the US Embassy in Riyadh.

Unemployment, too, is a major con-

cern in a country where 60 percent of the population is under 18, and cash-strapped government ministries can no longer guarantee a job to every citizen who wants one. At the same time 90 percent of private-sector jobs are filled by foreigners, who are seen, even by Saudi employers, as cheaper and more industrious than their Saudi counterparts.

Islamic militants have capitalized on the country's economic travails, accusing the ruling Saudi family of forcing sacrifices on ordinary citizens while continuing to live in royal splendor themselves.

By all accounts, however, the government is mindful of the need for economic diversification and jobs. For years now, foreign companies doing business with Saudi Arabia have been required to plow a percentage of their contracts into local investments, usually with Saudi partners. The idea is that instead of just selling goods and services to Saudi Arabia, the foreign companies can contribute technology and expertise to its development.

"It's a way to expand the private sector, energize the economy and create certain capabilities that are valuable to the government," said Suqair, a former air attaché at the Saudi Embassy in Washington who has run Advanced

Electronics since 1990.

In theory, such "offset" companies are supposed to make sense on their own merits. Not all turn out to be commercially viable, but Advanced Electronics is a success story, which is one reason why the government likes to include it on the itinerary of visiting foreign journalists.

Boeing established the company with Saudi partners in 1988 after winning a massive contract to upgrade the country's air-defense system. Besides telephone switches, Advanced Electronics makes components for American-made M1A1 tanks, F-15 and F-16 fighter planes and other defense-related products, some of which find their way into foreign markets. Sales last year hit \$90 million, up from \$64 million in 1994, according to Suqair.

Even more striking, the firm employs 195 Saudi citizens, about 60 percent of its work force. The Saudis work as executives, technicians, receptionists—even security guards.

Suqair prides himself on the fact that the Saudis on his assembly line generally work for other Saudis, without the insurance of foreign "trainers" so common at other private businesses here.

"We tell the Saudis, 'Look, you can do it, you've got what it takes,'" he said. "Perceptions and stereotypes about the Saudi work force have been shattered. Sick leave and unexplained absences, he notes, are down to just 2.3 days per year on average."

One of the company's Saudi technicians is Ziad Musallam, 31, an engineering graduate of King Saud University who worked for the Interior Ministry before going to Advanced Electronics three years ago.

# Like its members, Hare Krishna movement is maturing

By Mary Rourke  
LA Times-Washington Post  
News Service

LOS ANGELES—Saffron robes, shaved heads and prayer beads are still the classic symbols, but the Hare Krishnas are not the young zealots they used to be.

When members commemorate the 30th anniversary of the movement in the United States this month, they are more likely to be gray-haired members dressed in business suits.

Like its members—the baby boomers who were its earliest devotees in this country—the movement is maturing. You won't see them swarming Los Angeles International Airport anymore.

"We made mistakes in the past, we offended people and we apologized," says Anutananda Dasa, the movement's North American spokesman. "We are trying to rectify that."

Indeed, evaluation and restructuring are prominent features of Hare Krishna's aging face.

Some members, now in their mid-40s, look back on their earliest days in the

movement with a sense of humor.

"That was the rock 'em, sock 'em Hare Krishna movement, when a small number of zealots lived in the temple and gave everything to the movement," says Swami Hridayananda, who joined in 1969 as a student at the University of California, Berkeley.

In 1977, he was named one of 11 gurus worldwide to succeed the founder, Swami Prabhupada, who brought the religion to the United States in 1966. Hridayananda is now completing a doctorate at Harvard University's Sanskrit department and will teach at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley next fall.

"We look back and laugh a lot about ourselves, tackling people at airports and things," he says. "Now we're much more concerned about just being civilized."

Hridayananda, like more than 90 percent of North American Hare Krishna members, lives outside the temple and attends Sunday evening services. "We grew up, moved out of the temples, got married, had families," he

says. "We're building congregations."

Along with the emphasis on congregation-building, the movement's leaders are in the beginning stages of restructuring management.

Sudharma Dasi, who lives near Gainesville, Fla., is part of that effort.

"I was 19 when I joined; the oldest leaders were in their 20s," she recalls. "Now we are all married with children. It's very different from being young kids checking out an Eastern religion. We're looking at more mature systems of organization."

Plans include standardizing religious instruction so that temples around the world are teaching the same program, implementing child-care systems and developing business opportunities.

There are about 45 temples scattered across the United States and Canada, and all are supported primarily by donations from membership,

which is estimated at about 100,000 in North America, says spokesman Dasa. Worldwide, the unofficial figure is several million members; India has one of the largest concentrations of members.

Some temples, including the one in Los Angeles, are

headquarters of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, which publishes translations of sacred Hindu texts—particularly the 5,000-year-old Bhagavad-Gita—along with vegetarian cookbooks and others that relate to the movement. The book trust generates about \$10 million to \$15 million per year, which covers operating costs, says its president, Savasa, who is also president of the local temple.

A small video production operation rounds out the business ventures in Los Angeles. It produces videos with "a devotional perspective." The biggest success has been "Cooking With Kurma," featuring an Australian chef, which airs on PBS stations around the world.

A number of temples, including Los Angeles, have developed a Food for Life

program, serving free meals to needy communities in US cities, as well as disaster areas worldwide—most recently, Chechnya and Sarajevo.

These signs of stability in the movement come after a decade of controversial expansion in the 1970s, and a decade of conflict and turmoil following the death in 1977 of founder Prabhupada.

The '70s were marked by concerns that Hare Krishna was a cult. Parents still report to Cult Awareness offices and Cult Education programs that their teenage children live in temples and never call home. To combat such complaints, anyone younger than 18 needs parental permission to live in the temple.

A number of second-generation Hare Krishnas are now in their late teens or early 20s. Jaya Rhadhe, raised in Illinois by Hare Krishna parents, lives in the Los Angeles ashram. She turns 18 in July and plans to attend Santa Monica College and become a teacher.

She recalls her life in the Midwest: "It was a hard fit, having Jaya for my name, being vegetarian and born

into the movement. Now, I love wearing my sari."

If the '70s was a decade of fitful expansion, then the '80s were marred by disintegration. A number of public accusations concerning illicit acts by temple leaders, including child molestation, drug dealing and even murder, led to civil trials and the removal of several gurus from their positions of power.

During those turbulent years, Nori Muster was a public relations spokeswoman for Hare Krishna worldwide. She was based in Los Angeles until she left the movement in 1988. Her book, *Betrayal of the Spirit: My Life Behind the Headlines of the Hare Krishna Movement*, will be published by the University of Illinois in September.

"While the leader, Prabhupada, was still alive he could make final decisions and people respected them," she says.

"But with the loss of him, the organization turned dysfunctional." She describes the dozens of splinter groups that have formed to voice criticisms and call for reform. "There are bridges to be mended. Sometimes it seems

impossible that any bridges will be made," Muster says.

Larry Shinn, a Methodist minister and president of Berea College in Kentucky, has studied the Hare Krishna movement since 1980.

"It's been a rough history, but one sign of maturity is this move by critics from the inside to express their point of view," he says.

In the early '80s Shinn lived in 14 temples across the country, doing research for his book *The Dark Lord: Cult Images & the Hare Krishnas in America* (Westminster Press, 1987). He found that communities varied, depending on the quality of their leaders. "Tragically, some leadership has been rotten to the core, but most of the people were wonderful and very committed," he says.

The Governing Body Commission has continued to meet every five years in India. At their most recent gathering, this spring, members of the commission asked Shinn for his comments. "Today, the concern of gurus around the world is what is and is not working." ■

**Some members, now in their mid-40s, look back on their earliest days in the movement with a sense of humor.**

## Following the Olympics online

By Victoria Shannon  
LA Times-Washington Post  
News Service

THE UPCOMING festivities in Atlanta will provide a showcase not only for the world's greatest athletes, it will also be a test for the legions of entrepreneurs facing a prime opportunity to prove the utility of Internet publishing.

After all, the Centennial Olympics present a tailor-made challenge: The games have a huge global audience seeking instant results and details; the events generate far more information than the mainstream media can reasonably transmit to a broad audience; they breed fans of obscure sports, nations and competitors that big media will ignore completely; and they generate a continuous stream of breaking news, images and sounds.

The Web community clearly smells the opportunity: Six weeks before the games started, a query with the word "Olympics" in the

Alta Vista search engine generated some 40,000 hits. Luckily, we've done some cutting for you. Following are a few sure-to-be-hit pages, plus some personal favorites:

■ Like a number of sites, Discovery Channel Online (<http://www.discovery.com>) features on-line diaries kept by a number of athletes. Unlike others, however, Discovery makes its material available bilingually.

Thanks to the folks at Globalink Inc., a Fairfax, Va.-based translation software developer, the site will be available in Spanish as well. The Discovery package features multimedia profiles of a crew of athletes—and not just Americans, either—who will report on their training, hopes and fears as opening day draws near, as well as a roaming correspondent filing on-line and by videocam. It's a tougher job than usual for the translators, says Globalink's

Kelly Rae Mullins. For one, most translation jobs do not require overnight turnaround. For another, Web-speak isn't exactly mainstream language. "People on the Web tend to be more casual, more colloquial," she says.

Look for the "Espanol" link on Discovery's main page.

■ NBC got the Olympics broadcast franchise, and now it gets the Olympics on-line.

my vote for the most gorgeous and complete on-line coverage, too (<http://www.olympic.nbc.com>), if you're willing to ignore the tacky countdown clock ticking off the seconds to the games. Graced throughout with high-quality photos, the site's sport-by-sport section has every last rule (badminton shuttlecocks must have 16 feathers) and the outlook for each US team and each sport. Book excerpts of the 100 greatest moments in Olymp-

ics history offer a walk down memory lane, and two FAQs (NBC's and the US Olympic Committee's) answer any question you might have. That joyful Olympics theme music greets you, if your Web browser can handle it. Or you can just download the sound clip.

■ Like Discovery, the USA Today (<http://web.usatoday.com/olympics/olyfront.html>), ESPN (<http://espnnet.sportszone.com/editors/atlanta96/>) and AT&T (<http://www.olympic.att.com>) pages also carry diaries from selected athletes. Sports Illustrated (<http://pathfinder.com/silathens/olyhome.html>) has a well-done table of events (match the sport to the day) and Olympic merchandise for sale; AT&T hosts a trivia contest, and both ESPN and SI list every past medalist.

■ If you're headed to Atlanta for the fun, USA Today and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (<http://www.atlantajournal.com>) deliver the best poop on navigating Atlanta itself: maps,

nightlife, transportation and rentals, for starters. (Kids can get involved at the J-C site by signing up as a pen pal with a sports fan from across the globe.) The US Olympic Committee's official site is <http://www.olympic.org>.

■ One of the best unofficial Olympics collections is at <http://www.com-stock.com/dave>—a chatty, homegrown, expansive catalogue of links from a die-hard fan from Georgia, Dave Roselle.

■ If the name Billy Mills rings an Olympic bell, refresh your memory at this tribute page (<http://gn.mines.colorado.edu/7025/BillyMills.show.html>). You'll find downloadable movies and sound of what is called perhaps the greatest upset in Olympics track and field—when this athlete took the only American gold ever in the 10,000 meters in Tokyo in 1964.

■ Still hungry? There's always the 1998 Winter Games in Nagano, Japan <http://www.linc.or.jp/Nagano>. ■



● Sultan of Brunei, Hassan Al Bolkiah and Queen Haja Maryam during the celebrations of the Sultan's 50th birthday. The celebrations were attended by Prince Charles of Britain and the American singer Michael Jackson who is scheduled to hold three concerts in Girona, one of the biggest parks in South East Asia. Bolkiah, whose fortune is estimated at \$40 billion, spent \$25 million on this occasion, \$15 million of which for the pop singer.

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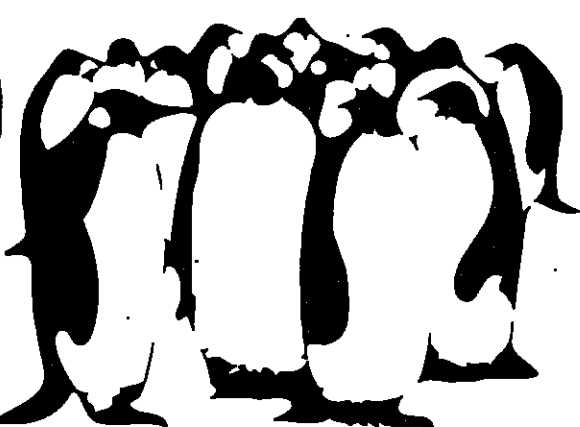
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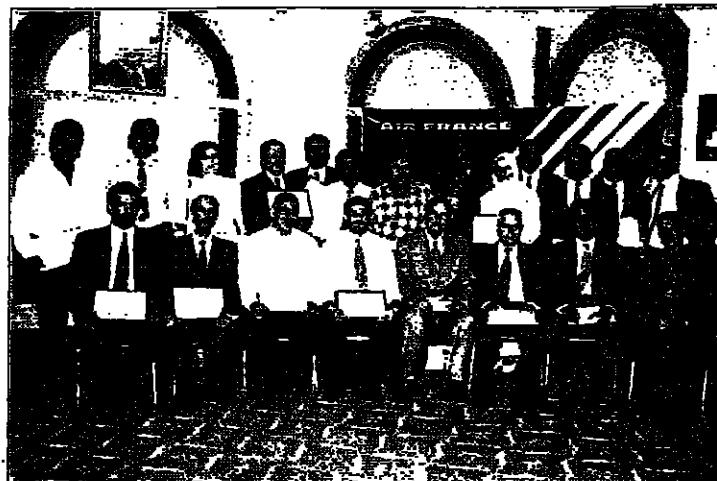


# AROUND TOWN



## Air France honors top travel agents

● Air France held its annual dinner for the top travel agents at the Fort Grand on Wednesday 10 July. It was attended by the Regional Manager for the Near East, Mr Yves Picchi. The Regional Manager of Air France for Jordan/Iraq, Mr Jean Jacques briefed the audience on the new Charles De Gaulle hub. Rewards were given to the top travel agents.



# Jerash Festival creates a euphoric Summer

By Munther Hamdan  
Star Staff Writer

Yesterday, Wednesday, the Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts was inaugurated by H.M. Queen Noor. The festival is expected to create a cultural euphoria during a hot summer as it hosts a multitude of Arab and foreign artists. The festival is seen as the main pillar of Jordan's culture and one that encourages tourism.

This year, the festival's agenda is full, appealing to all tastes. For those who love singing, seven Arab artists will present their latest albums as well as their famous old songs. These concerts are expected to attract people from all walks of life.

The Lebanese singer Majda Al Roumi, known for her delicate appearance and strong operatic voice is making a comeback in the festival. Al Roumi has fond memories of Jerash when a large audience

welcomed her on stage, during her first appearances.

Also, Sabah Fakhri, a Syrian master of the Andalusian Muwashshah brings the good old days of Arab tradition.

Fakhri, who is popular especially among the older generation, proved himself an experienced singer. His way of dancing, which accommodates the type of singing he performs, adds a special flavor to his performance.

Young people will head to Jerash to watch the long-awaited Lebanese singer Najwa Karam who has recently performed successful songs recorded on video clips. She and the young, charismatic Egyptian singer Mustafa Qamar will compete for the admiration of the audience. The Jordanian singer Rebbi Rabab also participates for the first time in Jerash along with

two United Arab Emirates (UAE) singers, Muhammad Al Mazem and Ahlam.

A large number of folklore groups will perform in different settings in Jerash. The

main goal of these groups is to present the cultural heritage of their countries.

Among those will be the National Music Conservatory, the French Children Choir, the Lebanese Zaghoul, Al Damour Group, the Chinese Folklore Group, Hussein Al A'hami Group for Iraqi Magams, and many others. Some Jordanian universities' music groups are also participating.

Another traditional activity in Jerash is the poetry festival. The poetry corner can be described as a festival in itself though the audience is limited to a number of intellectuals and interested people. The poetry evenings will be followed by a

critical seminars in which critics will evaluate the poems that are presented. This year, we have the Egyptian poet Ahmad Abd Al Mu'ti Hijazi, the Syrian Mamdouh Udwan, and Muhammad Al Qaysi from Jordan as well as many more.

There is special place for children in the festival. A musical concert by talented children will be held in cooperation with some schools and the NMC. Also, there will be a play for children titled *Kan Ya Ma Kan Fi Haitha Al Zaman*.

The activities will take place in Jerash, Amman and some archaeological sites in the north of the country. In Jerash, the shows will be held in the South Theater, Artemis, the Sound and Light Theater, Gracia and The Forum. Amman's activities will be held at the Royal Cultural Center, Darat Al Funun, the Palace of Culture, and Jabal Luweibdeh's Park which will hold a book fair.

## Al Roumi highlights Jerash

AMMAN (Star)—

Lebanese singer Majda Al Roumi participates in the Jerash Festival with seven new songs. She said at a press conference last week in the Inter-Continental Hotel that the Jerash Festival contributed a great deal to her success since she first sang in Jerash in 1986.

"Jerash opened its doors to me during the Lebanese war which locked everyone in," Al Roumi said.

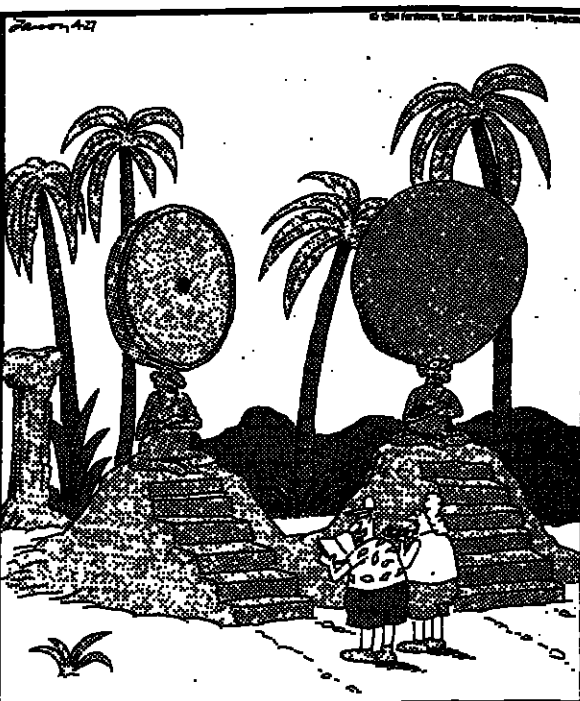
She performs love songs which are mostly based on poems. She sings for the famous Arab poet Nizar Qabbani. Her style is far from commercial as she seeks to revive the past and benefit from the new techniques of the present. She added that every artist must bear responsibility for what he or she presents to the audience and the coming generations. Some nationalistic songs are included in this new album.

Al Roumi is participating along with the Lebanese singer Najwa Karam. Commenting on the new Lebanese artists who use the video clip in their songs, Al Roumi said that each one of those has his own style. "What matters is the content of the song you want to present in the video clip," she added.

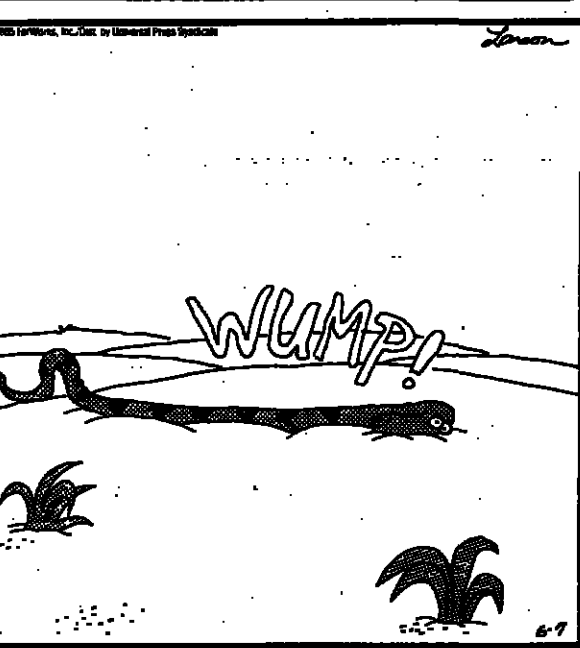
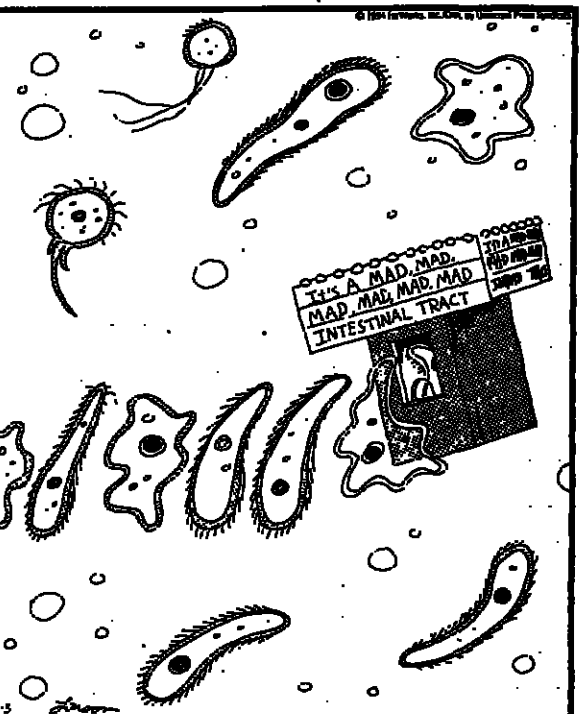


## THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Well, this guidebook is worthless! It just says these people worshipped two gods: one who was all-knowing and one who was all-seeing — but they don't tell you which is which, for crying out loud!"



When snakes trip.



"So let's go over it again: You're about a mile up, you see something dying below you, you circle until it's dead, and down you go. Lenny, you stick close to your brothers and do what they do."



## Sudanese artist Rashid Diab Unifying disparate cultures through art

By Harry Pullens  
Special to The Star

Art is reflective. In Rashid Diab's exhibition at Darat Al Funun, there isn't the slightest tinge of pessimism. For illusions and misgivings are overcome, while dreams and visions are transformed into reality.

For this first-rate artist, optimism and hope are unto him like tools, which he explained, are stronger than his imagery and symbols.

As one who is regrettably from a society with an endless civil war between the two disparate peoples and military dictatorship, the best is to hope and hope again.

The political allusions in his work are grasping, as they are revealing of frustrations resulting from repression and lack of democracy.

Diab explained that his colors are reflective of the colors of his country which remain bright despite the fact that people live under severe restraint. The dazzling spot in each work, he explained, is the light that illuminates his work, and offers hope for humanity.

"The color and form in my work illustrate moments of despair, happiness and hope but the most important element is of nostalgia for this universal world," he said.

His works, described as timeless and universal, are aimed at unifying people's hopes, dreams and needs, irrespective

of race, culture, creed or geographical location. There is harmony in his self-effacing work regarding the tribal, religious and racial conflicts in Sudan. He blames the conflicts on politics.

"My work is the most important medium in unifying people," he said. "Art is ultimately the connection between human beings. It's what sustains the cultures and indicates the material aspect of civilizations."

In his reflection of the Sudanese theme, he juxtaposes the African cultural symbolism with Arabic and Islamic symbolism not only to interpret the contemporary environment but the cultures of the two different peoples. This syncretic character reveals something nationalistic about him and his search for unity. It is also assuring and regenerative of a country locked up in an intense battle of race, culture and religion.

In a painting typical of such representation, entitled "Echoes," Diab said it echoes the rhythm of Africa which is symbolic of the African culture of drums. In the same painting, there is an object which resembles Arabic calligraphy he

explains as depicting Arabism. One may be right to say that the beauty of his work lies not in the aesthetic qualities of his art, but in this combination of the essentials of the arts of two people tied together in one destiny.

Diab is an artist/critic who knows what is acceptable in art by the connoisseur and the ordinary man. Every stroke, intentional or spontaneous, is expressive and conceptual. Everything seems premeditated as they are a representation of inner feelings that appear on an imaginative screen.

"When I start painting, there



Diab

is always a 'moment of great feeling' that comes in a fraction of time. There is always a screen through which I see beyond time," he said. "The ideas are so many, so I have to choose carefully certain images which touch my subconscious."

Diab sees himself as an incarnate of other beings in deep moments of thoughts. He seeks to create a world that exists in his abstract paintings. He refuses to regard his work as abstract saying the people, objects and symbols cannot be more vivid.

Diab earned his doctorate in Fine Art at the Complutense University in Madrid for his thesis on the Sudanese contemporary art movement. He believes it's imperative to understand one's culture and be elitist in every sense as an artist. "I think an artist must be a vivid reader and conscious of his contribution. Every stroke, every line, whatever may be in the artist's mind is part of his life," he said. "An artist could be a father of all schools from the time he begins to when he thinks his creation has finished."

He said the lapse in time takes him through fractions of seconds and centuries. "It really doesn't matter if it's in the past, present or future." What matters is how he can achieve the color, shape and form to suppress this fraction of time. He currently lives in Spain.

## Sakher Hattar presents Jordan's Oud

AMONG THE great musical talents in Jerash '96 is the Jordanian singer Sakher Hattar. He will perform today, Thursday, in the Royal Cultural Center using his favorite musical instrument, the oud (Arabic lute). Hattar, who is a founding member of Al Fuheis Folklore group, goes solo this year. He plays traditional songs that are deeply ingrained in Jordan's heritage. He said that "Our group seeks to give an identity to the Jordanian song."

Hattar is quite unique in his musical tastes and abilities. He composed some soundtracks for television. He and Tareq Al Naser composed the soundtrack of the Syrian series "The End of a Brave Man" and "The Brothers of the Earth."

Referring to the oud, Hattar said "I started from my early childhood to learn how to use this instrument. I had a good professor who put me on the right track. I continued my studies at Yarmouk University." His higher education furthered his knowledge about music and the different schools that teach the oud such as the Aleppo school. "This enabled me to create a distinguished style of music."

Hattar is currently conducting research on the history of Arabic music as part of his work in the National Music Conservatory of Noor Al Hussein Foundation. "I am trying to trace the gradual development of oud music, from the Abbasid era up till now," explained Hattar.

## Austrian Airlines celebrate third flight

● The Austrian Airlines held last week a dinner reception for travel and tourism offices and businessmen on the occasion of the third flight between Vienna and Amman. The ceremony was attended by the Regional Manager of Jordan/Iraq Mr Sami Abu Al Saud.



Abu Al Saud

**Wednesday 17 July**  
■ Rithi Rabab, (South Theater)

**Thursday 18 July**  
■ Majda Roumi, Lebanon (South Theater)  
■ Shakespeare's Richard III by Oddssocks, Britain (Artemis)  
■ Slovakian troupe (Sound and Light Theater)  
■ Children's festival and Arabic play (Gracia)  
■ Egypt's Al Neel Band (The Forum)  
■ Urzula Kryger (opera), Poland, (Um Qeis)

**Friday 19 July**  
■ Majda Roumi, (South Theater)  
■ Shakespeare's Richard III by Oddssocks, (Artemis)  
■ Slovakian troupe, (Sound and Light)  
■ Children's festival and Arabic play (Gracia)  
■ Al Neel (Forum)  
■ Katarzyna Jankowska (opera) Poland, (RCC)

**Saturday 20 July**  
■ Mohammad El Mazem, Ahlam UAE, (South Theater)  
■ poetry festival, (Artemis)  
■ Andalusian Muwashshat, Morocco (Artemis)  
■ Zaghul al Damour group, Lebanon (Sound and Light)  
■ Children's festival and Arabic play (Gracia)  
■ Slovakian band (Sound and

## Jerash Festival program

**Light**  
■ Al Neel (Forum)  
■ Urzula Kryger (opera) Poland (Um Qeis)

**Sunday 21 July**  
■ Mohammad Mazem, Ahlam UAE, (South Theater)  
■ Andalusian Muwashshat, Morocco (Artemis)  
■ Zaghul al Damour (Sound and Light)  
■ A children musical performance with MNC (Gracia)  
■ Sa'ed Abdel (Culture Palace)

**Monday 22 July**  
■ Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, (South Theater)  
■ Al Turath Folkloric Group, Syria (Artemis)  
■ Zaghul al Damour (Sound and Light)  
■ Children's play, (Gracia)  
■ Slovakian, (Forum)  
■ E Al Neel, Egypt (Forum)  
■ Spanish guitarist, (Mt Nebo)

**Tuesday 23 July**  
■ Mustafa Qamar, (South Theater)  
■ Al Turath, Syria (Artemis)  
■ Trakia, Bulgaria (Sound and Light)  
■ Children's play, (Gracia)

■ Al Neel, (Forum)  
■ Oud (Arabic lute) by Sakher Hattar, Jordan (RCC)  
■ Traditional songs, (Artemis)  
■ Tareq Al Naser (Sound and Light)  
■ Children's play, (Gracia)  
■ Al Neel, (Forum)  
■ Spanish guitarist, (RCC)

**Wednesday 24 July**  
■ Mustafa Qamar, Egypt (South Theater)  
■ Traditional songs, (Artemis)  
■ Tareq Al Naser (Sound and Light)  
■ Children's play, (Gracia)  
■ Al Neel, (Forum)  
■ Spanish guitarist, (RCC)

**Thursday 25 July**  
■ Mustafa Qamar, Egypt (South Theater)  
■ Iraqi music, Hussein Al A'hami, (Artemis)  
■ Mou'ta University Band, (Sound and Light)  
■ Arabic poets, (Gracia)  
■ Al Neel, (Forum)  
■ Maria Jose Monjas, pianist, Portugal (RCC)  
■ Karakalla, (Culture Palace)

**Friday 26 July**  
■ Mustafa Qamar, (South Theater)  
■ Theatrical performance, "Media" (Artemis)  
■ Amman National University band (Sound and Light)

■ Creative theater at Gracia  
■ Egyptian Circus, Trakia and Moroccan Muwashshat, (Forum)  
■ Syrian Bashrah Zargan, Sufi, (RCC)  
■ Karakalla, (Culture Palace)

**Saturday 27 July**  
■ Amman National University band (Sound and Light)  
■ "Media" (Artemis)  
■ German Folklore (Sound and Light)  
■ Hattar Amer, Jordan (Gracia)  
■ "The ox, my lord" (Gracia)  
■ Trakia, (Forum)  
■ Egyptian circus (Forum)  
■ Karakalla, (Culture Palace)  
■ Chamber music (Citadel)

**Sunday 28 July**  
■ Sabah Fakhri, Syria (South Theater)  
■ Play by Sharif Khazandar (Artemis)  
■ German folklore (Sound and Light)  
■ Hattar Amer and his Band, (Gracia)  
■ "The ox, my lord" (Gracia)  
■ Egyptian circus (Forum)  
■ Bashrah Zargan, (RCC)

**Monday 29 July**  
■ The Sabah Fakhri, Syria

(South Theater)  
■ Play by Sharif Khazandar (Artemis)  
■ Taipei Folklore, (Sound and Light)  
■ Rami Shafiq, (Gracia)  
■ "The ox, my lord" (Gracia)  
■ German folklore (Forum)  
■ Egyptian circus (Forum)

**Tuesday 30 July**  
■ Mazantini group, Spain (South Theater)  
■ Play by Sharif Khazandar (Artemis)  
■ Taipei folklore, (Sound and Light)  
■ Rami Shafiq (Gracia)  
■ Poetry (Gracia)  
■ German folklore (Forum)  
■ Egyptian circus (Forum)

**Wednesday 31 July**  
■ Mazantini group, (South Theater)  
■ Children's choir, France (Artemis)  
■ Family International, (Sound and Light)  
■ Poetry reading and singing by prodigy child Haitham Al Shomali (Gracia)  
■ Egyptian circus (Forum)

**Thursday 1 Aug**

■ Najwa Karam, Lebanon (South Theater)  
■ NMC, (Artemis)  
■ Family International, (Sound and Light)  
■ Hassan Salloom percussion band and solo flute, (Gracia)  
■ Chinese folklore, (Forum)  
■ Egyptian circus, (Forum)  
■ Egyptian ballet, Swan Lake, (RCC)

**Friday 2 Aug**  
■ Najwa Karam, (South Theater)  
■ The Cavern Beatles, UK (Artemis)  
■ Jordan University Band, (Sound and Light)  
■ Hassan Salloom percussion and solo flute, (Gracia)  
■ Chinese folklore, (Forum)  
■ Egyptian circus, (Forum)  
■ Egyptian ballet group, Swan Lake, (RCC)

**Saturday 3 Aug**  
■ Najwa Karam, Lebanon (South Theater)  
■ The Cavern Beatles, UK (Artemis)  
■ Jordan University Band, (Sound and Light)  
■ Chinese folklore, (The Forum)  
■ Egyptian circus, (The Forum)  
■ Egyptian Ballet, Swan Lake (RCC)  
■ Closing Ceremony (Gracia)

**Sunday 4 Aug**

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**Tuesday 6 Aug**

**Wednesday 7 Aug**

**Thursday 8 Aug**

**Friday 9 Aug**

**Saturday 10 Aug**

**Sunday 11 Aug**

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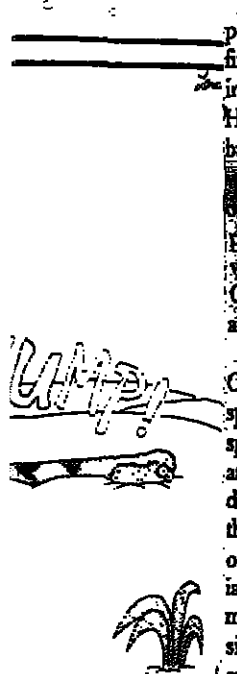
**Sunday 10 Nov**



18 JULY  
R SIDE  
GARY LARSON



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which, for crying out loud



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o. Lenny, you stick close  
I do what they do."

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JULY 1996  
A special section offering  
fresh perspectives on  
global issues prepared for  
The Star

# THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES  
ON FIVE CONTINENTS



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Greece's gift to the world now comes in corporate colors

## Athletes race Olympics for gold

By Georgios P. Malouchos

IT IS TRUE that a large part of the real power held in the past by the nation state is now held by enormous multinational companies, then it can be argued that the Olympic Games still serve a lofty ideal. They force these big companies to "fraternize," thereby suspending their overt competition in much the same way all wars stopped until the end of the ancient games.

Yet the ancient Olympics, as well as the modern version that succeeded them, were the exact opposite of what we know today. They were a tribute to the great ecumenical ideals, delivered by the athletes and organizers. As the philosopher Plato stated, it was the spiritual qualities of the Olympic games, far more than the athletes' physical bravery, that were rewarding.

Nowadays, instead of organizing the games in order to pay tribute, that tribute is used as an alibi for the production of a spectacle and the commercial profit that it earns. The center of gravity lies elsewhere. It has slowly been transferred from the collective tribute to the big spectacle and from there to unmerciful competition for gold medals.

Few remember that the real turning point for the Olympics came not at the first modern Olympiad, held in Athens in 1896, but four decades later in Hitler's Berlin. Not only the aesthetics, but also the aims of the Olympic ideal were—ineffaceably—redefined by the organizational choices of Hitler's propaganda genius, Joseph Goebbels. It was his idea to recast the Olympic Games to a kind of the Roman "Bread and Circus."

That legacy has endured. What the Olympic games really are today is a spectacle. An enormous, unrepeatable spectacle of planetary dimensions. An athletic spectacle, with the competitors driving higher and higher not only their own records but also the emotions of billions of TV spectators, a totalitarian spectacle, with enormous ceremonies, when all the human senses are simultaneously bombarded by messages that don't even leave their targets room to think.

So far there is little to criticize. Regardless of the way the planet has decided to organize its festivities, billions of people all over the world enjoy them and look forward to them eagerly. Democracy is perhaps the greatest of mankind's inventions, and the contemporary Olympic Games are "voted" for with passion by almost everybody. But the problem does not lie there. Nobody has any objections to festivities, especially when one is not obliged to watch them, and when one considers the fact that a growing part of the expenses is transferred to the shoulders of private persons.

Understanding the Olympic Games requires looking at them—and questioning them—for they really are, not as what people eventually want them to be. Why is the price for sponsoring the transport of the Olympic flame over a single kilometer so high? Why is there

a competition among the cities for the organization of the games, especially since private business now calls the shots?

Why does such an organization require an extremely powerful international committee, whose members live like Victorian princes and stroll around the world sharing something they have usurped and altered—The Olympic Ideal. We may also wonder if the local factors—prime ministers, majors, etc.—see anything other than their personal aggrandizement in the organization of such games. And, above all, we wonder how belittling it is for the

▶ RACING FOR GOLD PAGE 2

In the wake of the billion dollar debt left behind by the 1976 Montreal Olympics, privatization of the event seemed logical. Now it seems unstoppable. The International Olympic Committee has decreed that after this year's games in Atlanta, the host nation's government must guarantee the bills, but are they shutting the door on an empty stable?



## Memories of 1976 fade But torch still burns Canadian taxpayers

By Dan MacLeod

THE OLYMPIC CIRCUS left town 20 years ago. But the big top it left behind still looms over Montreal, casting a \$427 million shadow. In that shadow live the estimated 2 million Quebec residents who smoke. They remember July 1976 on a daily basis—even if they weren't alive then—as they kick in 20.4 cents per pack to help pay off the Olympic debt. That they are not allowed to smoke during the rock concerts and baseball games now held at the Olympic stadium is a further cause for outrage.

It's a safe bet that the majority of fine young athletes who competed in the 1976 summer Olympics will be old and fat by the time their party is paid for. Two decades after the event, the debt remains Olympian; almost a million dollars a week goes out the window in principal and interest payments at a time when one in four of Quebec's adults is unemployed.

Montreal's citizens were concerned about the cost of hosting the Olympics long before the event, but their fears carried little weight with the city's flamboyant mayor, Jean Drapeau. The event, he said, could no more incur a deficit "than a man can have a baby." Drapeau got to have his baby and the people were left with a \$1.4 billion bill, almost 500 percent more than the original budget.

Drapeau was not the only one to use the Olympics for fame or gain. French architect Roger Taillibert concocted a stadium designed to revolutionize engineering textbooks. Old-timers from Montreal's East End still speak with awe about the sight of 96 cranes dotting the skyline. Says Nick Auf der Maur, who wrote a book on the subject, "they brought in cranes from as far away as the southern United States at a cost of \$20,000 a day!"

There was also a trickle-down effect. Construction companies used sub-standard materials and workers practiced outright sabotage, recalls Auf der Maur. "Trucks would even drive onto the site, not unload, exit on the other side and come back to redeliver the same load. They'd charge two or three times for one load."

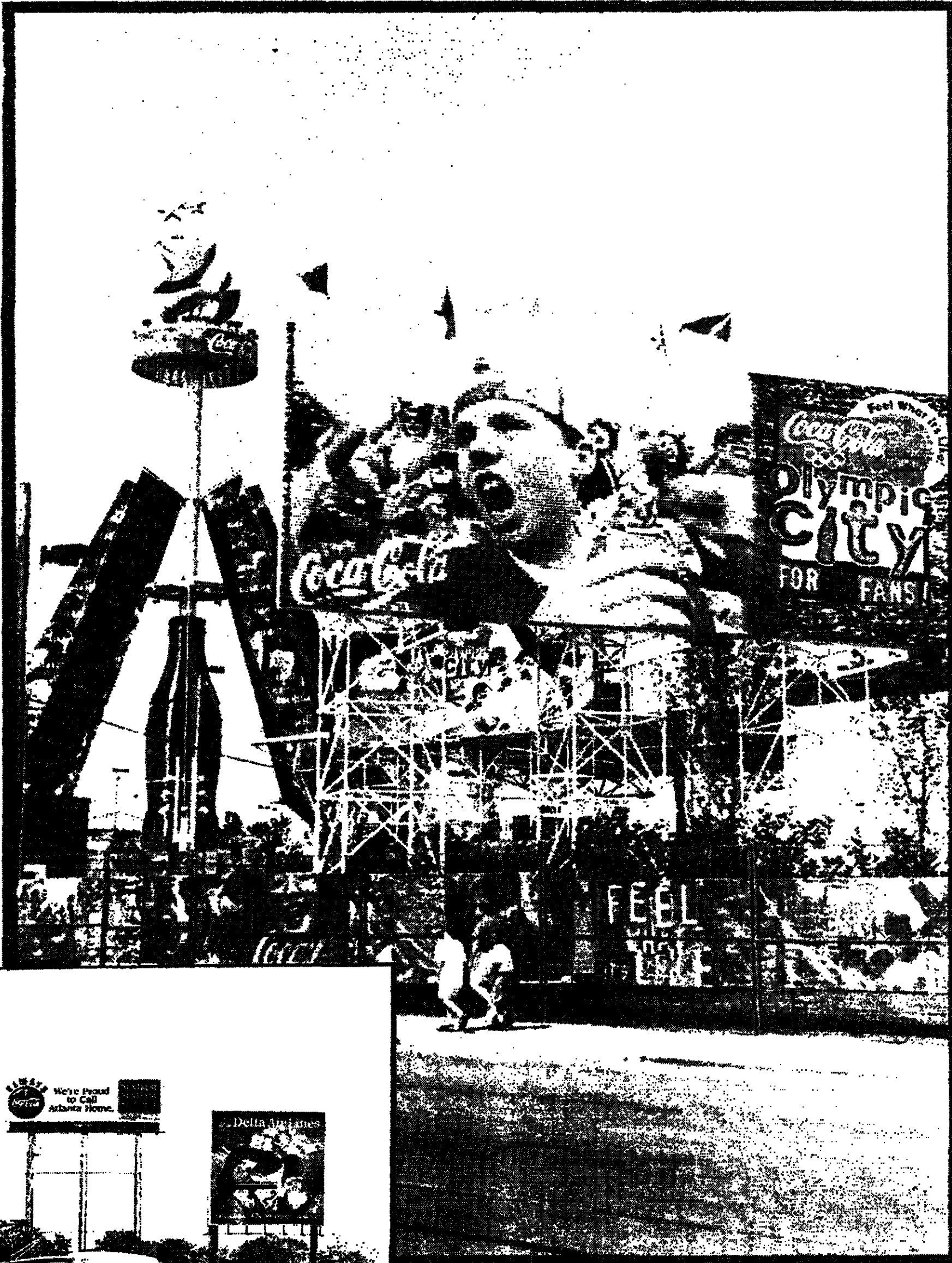
Jean-Marc Desjardins, a journalist who opposed the whole project from the start, ultimately received death threats for his highly critical coverage. "It was seen as manna from heaven," says Desjardins. "Everybody wanted to make a buck. And the architecture was so grandiose to begin with that a huge deficit was a certainty."

Eight months before the torch for the 21st Olympiad was lit, both the mayor and his star architect were pushed aside. The provincial government went so far as to expropriate the land under the Olympic complex. Local engineers took over and managed to complete most of the work on time. "It was a miracle the games even took place," says columnist Jean-V. Dufresne.

Desjardins agrees, adding that, "It was an eyesore! The stadium's crown jewel—the Olympic Tower—was only one-third complete and covered in construction equipment." An architectural landmark, the massive tower stands 40 stories above the stadium roof. But it wasn't finished until 1980. Likewise, the world-famous retractable roof wasn't completed until 1987 and was closed for good four years later. Today, it is so ripped that it will probably need to be replaced, boosting the \$75 million cost to date by another \$50 million.

Overall, the privilege of hosting the 1976 Olympics has cost Quebec's citizens \$3 billion. They were told they would pay \$310 million. So they look

▶ BURNED TAXPAYERS PAGE 2



Spot the sporting event: amidst a sea of billboards, the 1996 Summer Olympic Games take place in Atlanta this month. Over three-quarters of the US\$2 billion cost of the games will come from private sources, raising concerns that Olympic gold is being overshadowed by corporate gold





Race for sponsors is littered with hurdles

# Freed from state support, many German athletes are hoping for a Mercedes

By Emelia Jaroschek

LESSON HAS BEEN learnt by the Olympic hopefuls from the former East Germany—what you gain on the roundabouts you lose on the swings.

Being a top athlete in a communist society means being spoon-fed by Big Brother from kindergarten to nursing home; being one in a free-market society means you have to supply your own cutlery, and it isn't cheap. Serious athletes in today's Germany spend a lot of time running after that elusive, often unpredictable quarry—the sponsor.

"The individual battle for sponsorship can be so hard that many resort to taking on a manager, if they can afford one," says Andre Hoeppner, chief of Potsdam's Olympia Stützpunkt, one of 20 Olympic Support Bases nationwide that refer top athletes to the National Olympic Committee (NOK).

"In the old days, the leading figures were quickly taken under the wing of the state," recalls Hoeppner. "Education, a pro-forma job tailored to suit your training needs and the promise of a successful future handed to you on a silver platter once your sporting days were over were all part of the deal. All you had to do was deliver peak performance and say 'yes' in the right places."

NOK spokesman Manfred Seeger says that this option is gone. "We are sending about 500 sportsmen and women to Atlanta and I couldn't tell you off the cuff how many come from the former East (Germany). Many top GDR athletes moved across to Western sports associations the minute the Berlin Wall came down and some from the West have since moved to what was the East. But they all have one thing in common; they have to personally muck-in with the fight for sponsors."

That's an easy task for good looking world champions like Franziska von Almsick, formerly of the GDR "Franzi"

was immediately wooed and snapped up by a string of sponsors and is now worth a comfortable US\$8 million.

It's not so easy for the "uncrowned queen" of canoe racing, Birgit Fischer. Even with 20 world titles under her belt and competing in the Olympic Games for the fourth time, Fischer must deal with media coverage she describes as meagre at best.

With the flood of formerly state-sponsored athletes from the East into the sponsorship market, fishing for private benefactors has become especially tough in the new Germany. "Apart from powerful Mercedes backing at the international level in cooperation with the International Olympic Committee, there are eight leading concerns financing the lion's share of the German presence in the US," says Seeger. All eight are German or conduct business in Germany: Lufthansa, VW, Die Bankgesellschaft, Adidas, Kellogg, IBM, Deutsche Telekom and OBI.

While none of these companies has a lock on German sponsorship of the Olympics, "the cash coming in is not nearly enough," according to Seeger.

"With re-unification, the number of athletes sent over increased from 320 to 500—and so did the costs. Sponsorship currently covers only 65 percent of the bill." The rest comes from public and club contributions, lottery funds and the government. A few firms also make "in kind" contributions of supplies and equipment.

Adding to the problems facing Olympic hopefuls is the simmering debate over alleged waste. This stems from the fact the NOK and the country's umbrella German Sports Union (DSB), with its \$3,000 clubs and 20 million members, find themselves in competition as they desperately scout the business world for more patronage.

A disruptive power struggle, say critics,

is costing an already strapped sports establishment time and money. Many Germans feel an amalgamation of NOK and DSB would result in a streamlined, economical version of the cumbersome sports establishment that currently exists. A recent move in this direction by the Swiss, who received IOC assistance, is cited as a glowing example.

France, Holland, Belgium and Norway have already merged their principal governing bodies, while Italy has never known anything else. Now Sweden and Finland are planning to consolidate their sports establishment.

But in Germany, DSB and the NOK are still squabbling. DSB President Manfred von Richthofen is demanding a marriage. The NOK's Walther Troger is against taking the plunge, worrying that it would relegate the committee to the level of a department within the DSB whose only role would be handling trips to the Olympics. This vacillating has incurred the displeasure of the IOC, whose president, Juan Samaranch, invited the DSB to talks last October without including the NOK.

Faced with the prospect that Germany's proud athletic tradition could wane because of money, some businesses are stepping up their efforts.

Mercedes, already a major factor, has launched a "sports-plus-commerce" initiative centered on a group of businesspeople and sports administrators. This group is chaired by former Daimler-Benz CEO Edzard Reuter.

According to DSB spokesman Harald Pieper, this represents a shift by the giant automaker from simply being a patron to being an organizer as well. If all goes according to plan, other sponsors—and their check books—will be drawn to the center of gravity represented by Reuter's group. □

EMELIA JAROSCHEK WRITES FOR THE BERLIN-BASED NEWSPAPER BZ.

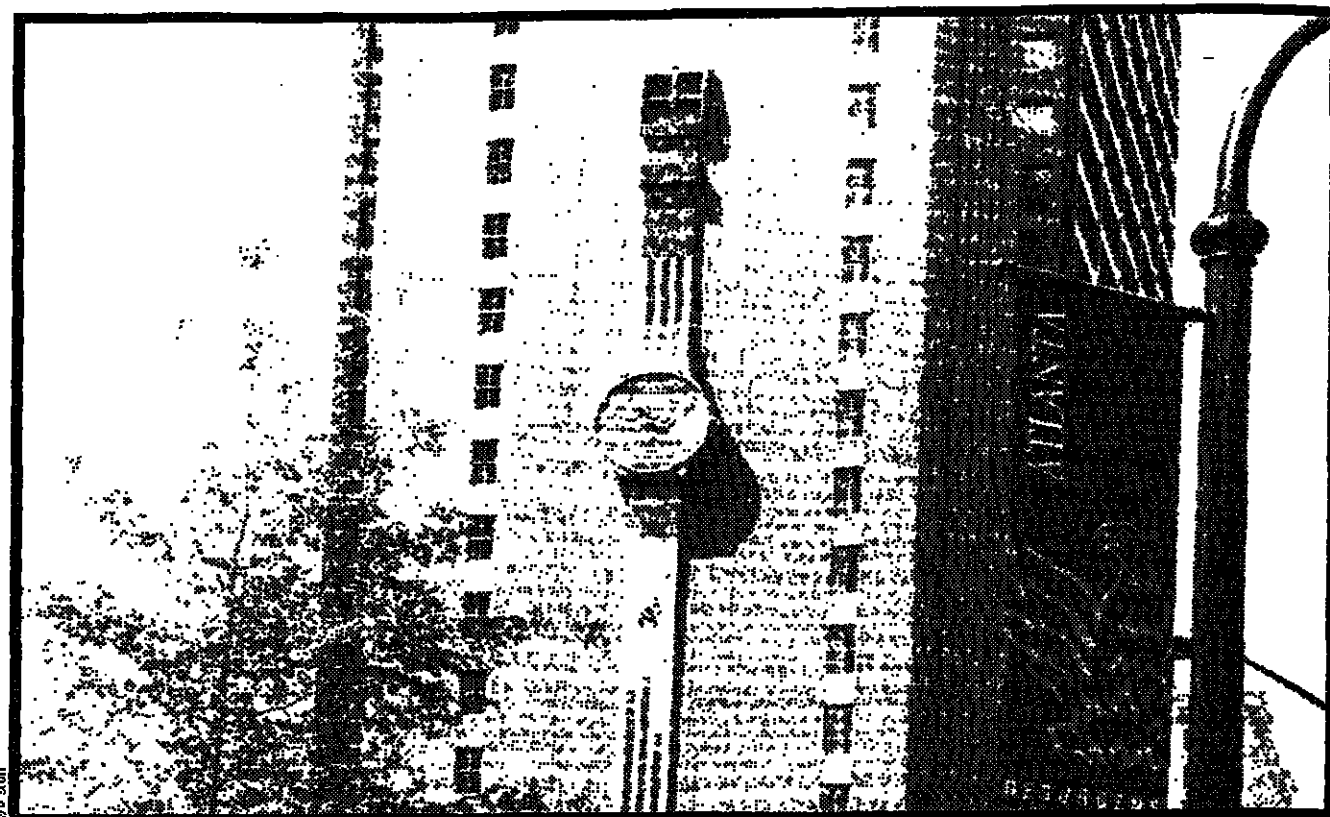
their own way—but without that dangerous lie about ideals. In that case it would be useful to privatize as much of the Olympic industry as possible.

But if that way is not judged satisfactory, perhaps Greece should consider leading a boycott of the Olympics in their present form. There are other countries, international organizations and eminent people who believe in the original Olympic ideal and would support such an effort. This, of course, would require that Greece not bid for the 2004 games, as it is getting ready to do.

If Greece insists upon reclaiming the games, and if it is eventually successful, it will have the historical opportunity to rebaptize the Olympics according to its geographical and spiritual sources. This return should be combined with some real innovations, such as the requirement for every participating country to stop all military operations, allowing the International Olympic Committee to undertake major infrastructure or social projects in the organizing country and establishing a tax for the games that won't go to the public treasury or to a private person, but to a work of international cooperation.

By doing this, Greece may secure the chance to rewrite, many centuries after their founding, the history of the Olympic Games. Will it have the courage to do so? □

GEORGIOS P. MALOUCOS WRITES FOR OIKONOMIKOS TACHYDROMOS, AN ATHENS-BASED WEEKLY BUSINESS MAGAZINE.



The Los Angeles model finds few buyers in Nagano

## Sending the bill to the government still works in Japan

By Mario Di Simone

IN 1984, LOS ANGELES staged the Summer Olympics, and the Games have never been the same since—unless they are being held in Japan.

The tide that Japan seems to be swimming against turned after the 1976 games in Montreal. With the memory of its astronomical deficit still fresh in their minds, LA organizers opted for a new approach to funding the Games. Lead by former Major League Baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth, the Los Angeles Olympic Committee made a pitch for profits and sold the Games to private sponsors who could, in turn, reap a tidy sum themselves.

The strategy proved wildly successful and, for the first time in its history, the Olympic Games posted a financial windfall with a surplus of US\$250 million. Atlanta hopes to continue that success. It won its bid for this year's Summer Games without any commitment from the federal government or the state of Georgia to cover shortfalls.

Following Atlanta, of course, are the 1998 Winter Games which will be hosted by Nagano, Japan, a sprawling industrial city 200 kilometers north-west of Tokyo. But despite the success of Los Angeles and the efforts of Atlanta, Nagano organizers have maintained a traditional approach—send the bill to the government.

After staging the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and the Sapporo Winter Games eight years later, Japan's approach to funding has mostly remained the same. Of the estimated 100 billion yen needed to stage the Nagano Games, over one third—34 billion yen (\$330 million)—will come from government coffers via subsidies and government-controlled revenue sources such as lotteries, gold coins and stamps.

With regard to Atlanta, the Japanese government will front 170 million yen of the 344 million yen needed to send its athletes to compete in the Games. The remaining capital required for both Atlanta and Nagano will come from a variety of sources, including the International Olympic Committee (IOC), television revenues, and private foundations which traditionally support the nation's amateur athletes.

Responsibility for Japan's involvement in the Olympics, and with international sporting events in general, lies with the Japan Olympic Committee (JOC), a private non-profit corporation organized in 1989 to oversee the development of the nation's athletes, and to conduct the business of international sport. While the JOC is a private corporation, its funding is largely supported by the Japanese government, a situation likely to remain unchanged in the near future.

Isako Koshino, a spokeswoman in the Olympic Movement Department of the JOC, explains that "there has been some recent movement to attract corporate sponsors for additional income, but the JOC's main resource has traditionally been the government."

Most of the money coming from corporate sponsorship, Koshino adds, is through links with domestic corpora-

tions involved in supporting various athletic organizations. The *Gambare Nippon* (Go Japan) campaign, for instance, is an association of domestic corporate sponsors which provides some of the money to help sustain athletes in their training. The association donates money independently of the JOC and disperses the cash to various sports federations, i.e., swimming, track and judo.

Koshino doesn't see any changes soon in the way Japan funds its participation in the Olympics, but the burdens of a world economy may force the country to re-evaluate its position. Already, Nagano organizers are scrambling for a greater share of IOC revenues from the 1998 Games. The combination of a strong yen and an ongoing economic slump have organizers predicting they could be short a whopping 10 billion yen. With domestic fiscal troubles occupying the current administration—including the use of taxpayers' money to bail out failed housing loan companies—the government might not be in the mood to fork out another 10 billion yen.

In light of these circumstances, Japan may find itself turning more and more to privatization. If Atlanta is as successful as Los Angeles, the prospects of huge profits may be too enticing to pass up. But for now, says the JOC's Koshino, Japan is staying off the bandwagon. □

MARIO DI SIMONE WRITES FOR THE TOKYO-BASED *Mainichi Daily News*.

BURNT TAXPAYERS

Continued from page 1

with mixed feelings at the "Coca-Cola Olympics" that will be held this year in Atlanta. Surprisingly, many seem to feel that having private enterprise pick up the huge bill is far from ideal.

According to Auf der Maur, there has always been a certain amount of hypocrisy associated with the Olympics, the "amateur" status of Eastern Bloc nations up to 1988 being a case in point. "But now it's the soul of sport itself which has been lost. All sports at almost all levels...it's all become shoddy," he says.

In Dufresne's opinion, "There are so few things in the world today that exist above base mercantilism. Now it's obvious that even the Olympics are for sale. The people in charge should simply stop feeding us lines about the whole thing being so 'noble'."

Says Desjardins, "It's a fact of life under capitalism. It began, appropriately enough, in Los Angeles in 1984. But I've seen it coming for 20 years or more. Just look at television advertising and professional sports—strikes, lock-outs, then bigger and bigger deals. It was to be expected. Still, it's a real shock when it actually happens."

The one word which inevitably crops up when discussing Atlanta in Quebec is "cheap." Yet there has never been so much money involved in one event in the history of the planet. □

DAN MACLEOD IS A MONTREAL-BASED CORRESPONDENT FOR THE CBC TELEVISION NETWORK.

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## The IDC/World Times Information Imperative Index Research Findings

The first comparative analysis of levels of information technology, infrastructure and usage in 55 countries

The Third Revolution: The 1996 IDC/World Times Information Imperative Index offers an extensive analysis of the Information Imperative Index first released in the June issue of The World Paper.

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- \* 20 key variables defining country aptitude to adopt information technology
- \* Report highlights:
  - analysis of the implications of the index research and its findings
  - full discussion of the methodology
  - tables detailing the 20 components measured for each country

- \* A strategic planning tool for:
  - governments
  - information technology vendors
  - international organizations
  - financial institutions

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# The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on JTV  
from 20-26 July

## ENGLISH PROGRAMS

**SATURDAY**  
3:05—Moonin  
3:30—Pumpkin Patch  
3:45—Big Brother Jake  
4:10—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:25—Olympic Games  
10:00—News in English  
10:20—Olympic Games  
1:40—Varieties  
2:25—Olympic Games

**SUNDAY**  
3:05—The Mask  
3:23—Bush School  
3:35—Mac and Mutley  
3:55—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:15—Olympic Games  
10:00—News in English  
10:20—Olympic Games  
1:55—Varieties  
2:25—Olympic Games  
06:35—Closing

**MONDAY**  
3:05—Richie Rich  
3:30—Bankers  
3:55—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:15—Olympic Games  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:20—Olympic Games  
02:15—Varieties  
06:10—Closing

**TUESDAY**  
2:45—Opening  
2:50—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:15—Olympic Games  
8:00—Varieties  
8:22—Olympic Games  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:20—Olympic Games  
02:05—Varieties  
02:25—Olympic Games  
06:10—Closing



Athens 1896, the first Olympic Games in modern history.

**WEDNESDAY**  
3:45—Opening  
3:50—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:20—Olympic Games  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:20—Olympic Games  
02:15—Varieties  
02:25—Olympic Games  
06:35—Closing

**THURSDAY**  
3:15—Opening  
3:20—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:15—Olympic Games  
10:00—News at Ten

**FRIDAY**  
2:45—Opening  
2:50—Olympic Games  
7:00—News in French  
7:15—Olympic Games  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:20—Olympic Games  
06:35—Closing

## PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

**SAMEDI**  
5:00—Dessins animés  
5:15—Emission jeunesse

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7:15—Magazine  
Cinq sur cinq

**MARDI**  
5:00—Dessins animés  
5:15—Emission jeunesse  
La vie devant moi  
5:30—Jeux  
Pyramide  
6:00—Magazine  
Savoir plus santé  
Non à la douleur, oui à la morphine  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine  
Ushuaia

**MERCREDI**  
5:00—Dessins animés  
5:30—Série  
Simenon  
Le moucheur de Joseph  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine  
Sports et musique

**JEUDI**  
5:00—Dessins animés  
5:30—Variétés  
Le monde est à vous  
Lenny Kravitz  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine  
Ushuaia  
8:00—Variétés  
Taratata

**VENREDI**  
5:00—Dessins animés  
5:30—Film  
Pasteur, cinq années de rage  
7:00—Le Journal  
7:15—Magazine  
Allo la terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

## Cinema

"THE JUROR" (Columbia/TriStar, \$102.65): Not much different in theme from 1994's "Trial by Jury," this melodrama casts Demi Moore as a member of a jury who becomes the target of a sinister representative (Alec Baldwin) of the defendant in the case. She faces a barrage of threats aimed not only at her, but also at her young son, to force her actions to result in either a mistrial or an acquittal. \*\* (R; AS, P, V)

"... AT FIRST SIGHT" (Vidmark, \$94.99): A number of faces familiar to TV viewers turn up in this romantic comedy, as Jonathan Silverman ("The Single Guy") plays a young man who develops an immediate attraction to a lady ("Kate & Allie" alumna Allison Smith) when their paths cross. His best friend (Dan Cortese, of "MTV Sports") then decides to put those feelings to the test by pursuing her himself. \*\* (R; AS, P)

**HELD OVER: "DEAD MAN WALKING"** (PolyGram, \$99.99): Susan Sarandon earned an Academy Award for this fact-inspired and much-acclaimed drama, adapted for the screen and directed by her significant other, Tim Robbins. She portrays Sister Helen Prejean, who dedicates herself to helping a death-sentenced murderer (Sean Penn, also excellent) during his final days in a New Orleans prison. \*\*\*\* (R; AS, P, V)

"LIVE NUDE GIRLS" (Republic, \$96.16): Despite the title, the estimable female cast members of this comedy actually spend quite a bit of the film relatively clothed. The tale centers around a premarital party for a lady (Kim Cattrall), and the margarita-fueled conviviality eventually inspires other attendees to reveal their most closely kept secrets. Dana Delany and Cynthia Stevenson ("Hope & Gloria") also star. \*\*\* (R; AS, P)

"THE MADDENING" (Vidmark, \$94.99): As well-known as they are for their respective images, Burt Reynolds and Angie Dickinson both make big departures in this melodrama directed by the late John Huston's son Danny. The performers play a couple grieving over the loss of their offspring and his family; they hold a traveler (Mia Sara) and her daughter captive in their remotely located home. \*\* (R; AS, P, V)

**COMING SOON: "CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY"** (Miramax, July 16): Novelist Alan Paton's classic story of racial tension in South Africa stars James Earl Jones and Richard Harris. (PG-13)

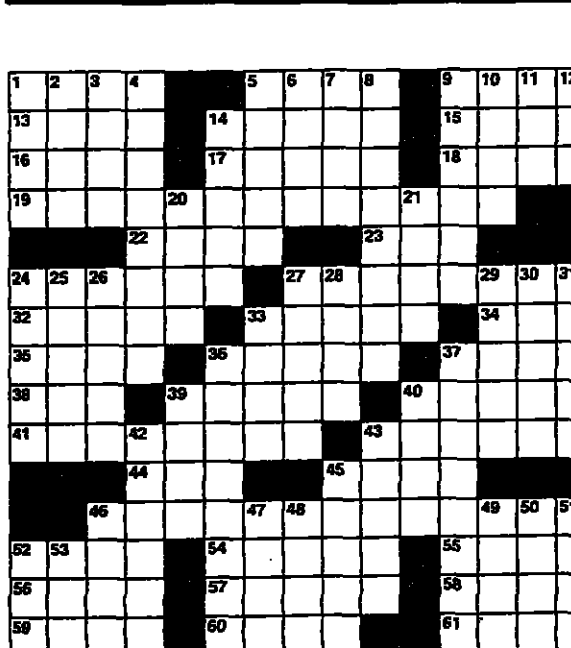
"EYE FOR AN EYE" (Paramount, July 16): Sally Field plays a woman seeking vengeance against the felon (Kiefer Sutherland) who assaulted and killed her daughter. (R)

"FOUR ROOMS" (Miramax, July 16): Four writer-directors, including "Pulp Fiction's" Quentin Tarantino, worked on this comedy about antics in a hotel; Tim Roth stars. (R)

**FAMILY VIEWING GUIDE KEY:** AS, adult situations; N, nudity; P, profanity; V, violence; GV, particularly graphic violence.

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- ACROSS**
- 1 Banner
  - 5 Neighborhood
  - 9 Radar
  - 13 Image
  - 14 Oak nut
  - 15 Cereal grain
  - 16 Above
  - 17 Wood dye
  - 18 So be it
  - 19 Articles of equipment
  - 22 Something lacking
  - 23 Boy
  - 24 Flight of steps
  - 27 Ballet
  - 32 Fluke a stringed instrument
  - 33 Traverse
  - 34 Many
  - 35 House compartment
  - 37 Snake and
  - 38 Sharp tooth
  - 39 Doctrine
  - 40 Eat away
  - 41 Billiard shot
  - 42 Kind of
  - 43 Networks
  - 44 Humor
  - 45 Fine spray
  - 46 Firm intention
  - 52 Part of the leg
  - 54 City on the Nile
  - 55 Jason's ship
  - 56 Scottish skirt
  - 57 Stopwatch
  - 58 British nobleman
  - 59 Lazily
  - 60 Snow
  - 61 Vehicle before high or deep
  - DOWN
  - 1 Complete failure
  - 2 Volcanic rock
  - 3 Declare positively
  - 4 Showy flower
  - 5 Behaved
  - 6 Laugh loudly
  - 7 Ireland
  - 8 Historian
  - 9 Plaids
  - 10 Variety of bean
  - 11 Frost
  - 12 Piggy
  - 14 Ruckus of burning
  - 20 Hair wave, for short
  - 21 Girl
  - 24 Long narrow piece
  - 25 The ones there
  - 26 Fragrance
  - 27 Gratings
  - 28 Solitary
  - 29 Flooded
  - 30 Compact
  - 31 Borders
  - 36 Guards
  - 37 Gab persuasively
  - 39 Give off
  - 40 Isolated hill
  - 41 Lasser
  - 45 Stuck in the mud
  - 46 Sour pickle
  - 47 Train track
  - 48 Certain actor
  - 49 Metal
  - 50 Monster
  - 51 Predicament
  - 52 Slalom
  - 53 Concealed

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## —THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

**Weekly Tip:** Catch up on reading and finish paperwork. Interesting gossip will be plentiful.

**Aries (March 21-April 19):** You'll be easily agitated, so don't do anything stupid. Save your shopping expedition until later and get good deals on items for your home.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20):** It'll be easy to spend more than you'd planned on romance. Learn lots of new ways to make and save money at a gathering of neighbors.

**Gemini (May 21-June 21):** Your major focus is money. A friend has financial difficulties. Don't offer a loan — you'll need all your spare change.

**Cancer (June 22-July 22):** Ignore a rude remark from an older person who's under a lot of pressure. You're applying some of it, actually. You'll win more points later.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22):** Work out. Authority figures are oppressive and inflexible so don't bother to argue. Sleep in and then get busy on your list. Hit it hard and quiet a persistent person's nagging.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Attend a family reunion. Not only will you have a great time, but you can also come up with a great business idea.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23):** A friend's brusque advice could help you avoid a big mistake. Save as much money as possible — you'll want it for fun and games.

**Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21):** Study economics using your own money. If you pass the class, you'll have enough cash for a minivacation.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** An inspirational idea helps you solve a financial problem. Concentrate on your work. Toss the ball to a friend in order to accomplish what you need done.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Hold your temper or you'll make matters worse. Get a thrifty friend to help you make a wise purchase.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Learn a new trick to solve a domestic problem. Make decisions about your home life and/or friends.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20):** Take care not to lose money. You'll be able to concentrate well, so study tough subjects.

**If You're Having a Birthday This Week:** You can get a promotion if you can pass the test. Study up. With a good team on your side, you can achieve financial security. Go for it.

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## Bridge

The Trumps Came in One By One  
By Tannah Hirsch

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

**NORTH**  
♠ 10  
♥ K 4  
♦ K 7 3 2  
♣ A J 6 5 4 2

**WEST**  
♠ 7 6  
♥ Q J 10 7 5  
♦ J 9 8 4  
♣ Q 10

**EAST**  
♠ K J 8 4  
♥ 9 6  
♦ Q 10 6 5  
♣ K 9 7

**SOUTH**  
♠ A Q 9 5 3 2  
♥ A 8 3 2  
♦ A  
♣ 8 3

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass  
2♥ Pass 2NT Pass  
3♥ Pass 3♠ Pass  
4♥ Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠  
When you have a long, weak trump suit, it is usually a sound tactic to single in as many trumps as possible by ruffing. That simple formula was all declarer needed to land the spade game on this hand.

Since South's auction had shown a minimum with 6-4 in the majors, North discarded all thoughts of playing three no trump and reluctantly gave preference in spades on a singleton. South naturally proceeded to game.

West led the queen of hearts, and declarer was not overly impressed with his chances until he studied the position more carefully. The fact that a trump had not been led gave a ray of hope.

Declarer won the heart lead in hand, cashed the ace of diamonds and crossed to dummy with the king of hearts to take a club discard on the king of diamonds. A diamond was ruffed with the deuce of spades and a heart was ruffed with the ten.

Had East overruffed, declarer would have had an easy ride by simply leading the ace and queen of spades on regaining the lead. Instead of overruffing, East discarded a diamond. A fourth diamond was led, and East's goose was cooked.

East opted to ruff with the eight. South overruffed with the nine, crossed to the ace of clubs and ruffed a club with the three.

The contract was now assured — declarer had nine tricks in the bank and the ace of spades was still to come. Indeed, when declarer exited with a heart the defenders could not prevent declarer from scoring an overtrick with the queen of spades.

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## NMC to present versatile music activities at Jerash 1996

AS REQUESTED by Jerash Festival, the National Music Conservatory (NMC)/Nawar Al Hussein Foundation will, for the second year, cooperate with Jerash Festival in presenting unique Arab and western classical music activities.

On Thursday 18 July renowned Jordanian oud soloist, Sakher Hattar, will launch the first of these activities as he performs oud compositions by Farid Atrash, Munir Bashir, Mohammad Kasabgi, Riad Sunbati and many others. The following day, admirers of the great Polish composer Frederic Chopin have a date with a memorable recital as Polish pianist, Katarzyna Borzykowska performs pieces by Chopin. Also from Poland, Mezzo soprano, Urszula Kryger, accompanied by Borzykowska, on the piano, will give an enchanting opera evening to be held on Saturday 20 July, featuring a delightful program of arias and songs.

The premiere music performance of the Festival will be held on Monday, 22 July at the South Theatre as the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, the Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory and Jordan Armed Forces Band, a total of 180 musicians, come together to perform an evening of Grand Music And Fireworks. The musicians will give "a must see" program featuring, among many, Tchaikovsky's magnificent "1812 Overture" to be concluded by firing canons and fireworks, a feat for the eye and the ear.

The premiere performance will be followed by another piano recital presented by Portuguese pianist, Maria Jose Morales to be held on Thursday, 26 July. Switching to a lighter tone, Spanish guitarist Miguel Angel Cortes will present on Wednesday, 24 July a delightful guitar evening. The Artemis Theatre, on Wednesday 31 July will echo the angelical voices of 63 boys, comprising the French Opera Boys Choir, as they sing some of the most brilliant tenor compositions by modern and classical European composers.

Not so traditional but ever so enchanting, the Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory, under the baton of Mohammad Othman Sidqi, will perform on Thursday, 1 August at Artemis Theatre orchestral compositions of famous songs by the most famous Arab singers and musicians such as Fairuz, Abdul Wahhab, Abdul Halim Hafez, Farid Atrash and others.

The NMC will present these activities for the second year in a row, following its success in presenting the music activities of last year's Jerash Festival. ■

## Jumble

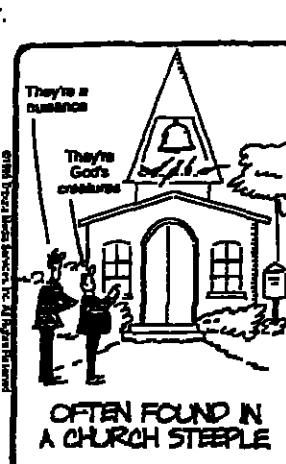
Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DAYCE

PRAVO

SEWBOT

YARPIC



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

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Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

Answer: OOOOO OF "OOOO"

## Words of Wisdom

A part of maturity is learning to work effectively with people you don't like.

Initial impressions are difficult to change, even when there is strong evidence to the contrary.

The worst kind of evil is perpetrated by malicious people who believe themselves to be virtuous.

Solitude is unfairly maligned.

If your character is right, you don't need to worry about your reputation.

If you want people to value your opinions, speak little and speak well.

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## The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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# Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

## Benjamin Netanyahu attendu en Jordanie

Le nouveau Premier ministre israélien Benjamin Netanyahu (notre photo) devrait se rendre en Jordanie le 25 juillet pour rencontrer le roi Hussein de Jordanie. Cette visite fait partie, avec celle qu'il effectuera aujourd'hui en Égypte, de ses premiers déplacements officiels dans des pays arabes. Le Premier ministre jordanien a déclaré que cette visite «sera extrêmement importante et pas seulement protocolaire». La Jordanie fera part à M. Netanyahu de «son inquiétude que le processus de paix soit vidé de son contenu essentiel, à savoir l'échange des territoires contre la paix comme il a été stipulé lors de la conférence de Madrid» en 1991 qui avait lancé le processus de paix arabo-israélien. Qualifiant la semaine dernière de «négatifs» les propos de M. Netanyahu sur «Jérusalem et la poursuite de la politique de colonisation» dans les territoires occupés, M. Kabriti a pour la première fois émis des critiques sur la politique du nouveau Premier ministre israélien. Jusqu'à présent, la Jordanie avait en effet demandé à ses voisins arabes d'attendre avant de juger le nouveau gouvernement et sa politique. Selon certains responsables jordanien, ce ton plus ferme serait dû aux déclarations jugées «provocantes» de M. Netanyahu concernant Jérusalem, un sujet auquel le roi Hussein attache une importance toute particulière.



Jérash 1996

## Jérash se remet à l'heure de son festival

Pendant deux semaines la ville de Jérash va devenir le pôle d'attraction culturel de la Jordanie. Dans un cadre historique fantastique, des dizaines de troupes jordanien et internationales vont se relayer sur scène pour interpréter du théâtre, du chant, de la danse ou de la poésie.

### SELON

**Tout le monde** à Amman parle d'Internet. On en parle même beaucoup trop. Phénomène parti ré-  
centement des États-Unis et combinant deux technologies différentes mais appa-  
rentées, l'informatique et les télécommunications, le ré-  
seau Internet fascine tous les pays de la planète y compris la Jordanie.

Le nombre de publications spécialisées, d'articles de journaux et d'émissions télévisées sur le sujet que nous avons eu l'occasion de lire ou de voir depuis un an environ est phénoménal. Il est peu de soirées à Amman pendant lesquelles le fameux «réseau» n'est pas évoqué. Ne pas connaître Internet, ou plutôt rien à avoir à dire dessus, revient à être considéré comme un ignorant. On parle, on écrit, on utilise-t-on vraiment?

Qui dit Internet dit ordinateur plus téléphone. Or la Jordanie, quoiqu'étant très moderne dans certains domaines, ne possède pas un réseau comparable à celui de la France, de l'Europe ou des États-Unis. L'accès à Internet reste de plus en plus onéreux dans le royaume. La conséquence de cet état de fait est que le nombre d'utilisateurs est faible. En étant optimiste, je pense qu'on peut chiffrer le nombre d'abonnés à 4 ou 5000 personnes. Soit une proportion d'environ 1 pour 1000. Et encore! Ce chiffre comprend tous les utilisateurs, ceux connectés en direct sur Internet (une minorité) et ceux reliés uniquement à la messagerie électronique E-mail (une majorité).

L'impact réel d'Internet n'est donc pas celui qu'on lui prête dans les médias. Du moins pas dans les pays en voie de développement. Le président d'un grand groupe français d'électronique déclarait récemment que le produit à l'exportation le plus important de sa société n'était pas du tout les nouveaux réseaux informatiques mais simplement le téléphone dans sa plus simple expression. Que l'on prenne en compte le volume de contrats signés avec les pays du tiers monde, ou leur valeur financière, on se rend compte que le téléphone «tout nu» reste encore, et de loin, le plus important. La demande d'achat d'appareils simples ou d'extension de réseaux téléphoniques sont bien supérieures à celles de tout autre secteur.

Tout cela ne veut pas dire qu'Internet est inutile et inintéressant en Jordanie. Bien au contraire! L'ignorer reviendrait à se mettre en marge du progrès technique. Le pays peut être fier d'avoir été l'un des premiers de la région à avoir autorisé et permis l'installation d'Internet. De plus, la qualité fort acceptable des lignes téléphoniques locales encourage un nombre sans cesse croissant de personnes à s'abonner.

Ce qu'il ne faut pas perdre de vue, c'est le décalage évident entre l'importance qu'Internet peut avoir, par exemple en France ou aux États-Unis, et celle qu'il a pour l'instant en Jordanie. Un impact différent qui s'explique par des différences technologiques et sociales. En fait, le gros de la population dans ce pays a d'autres préoccupations que celles d'être connecté à Internet. Et il faudra attendre encore longtemps avant de voir apparaître à Amman, à l'instar de Paris, des cafés-Internet.

Le numérique, bien plus pittoresque, fera l'affaire en attendant.

Jean-Claude Elias

A la cité romaine de Jérash, les préparatifs ont duré plusieurs semaines pour accueillir le quinzième festival de Jérash. Ce festival est devenu un carrefour et un lieu de rencontre de la culture internationale. C'est au milieu des vestiges glorieux de l'Histoire que se produisent chaque année de nombreuses troupes internationales, redonnant ainsi vie aux anciennes places romaines. Au programme figurent des troupes internationales, nationales et locales d'art folklorique et d'art moderne qui se relaieront du 17 juillet au 3 août.

Faisant partie des meilleurs festivals culturels du monde arabe, le festival de Jérash crée une ambiance de fête au sein de cette ville, mais aussi chez les pays voisins. Beaucoup de spectateurs devraient notamment faire le voyage depuis les pays du Golfe, alors qu'ils avaient tendance à bouder les dernières éditions.

Venant d'Angleterre, la troupe «Odd Sox» jouera la pièce de théâtre *Richard III* de William Shakespeare. Toujours du même pays, le spectacle *The Cavern Beales* sera à l'affiche pour la deuxième année consécutive. «Suite au succès qu'il a obtenu en 1995 et à la forte demande des jeunes, nous avons décidé de les inviter une deuxième fois», explique Akram Masarweh, directeur du festival de Jérash.

L'Europe sera largement représentée dans cette nouvelle édition du festival. Une chorale française effectuera le déplacement: la Maîtrise des Hauts de

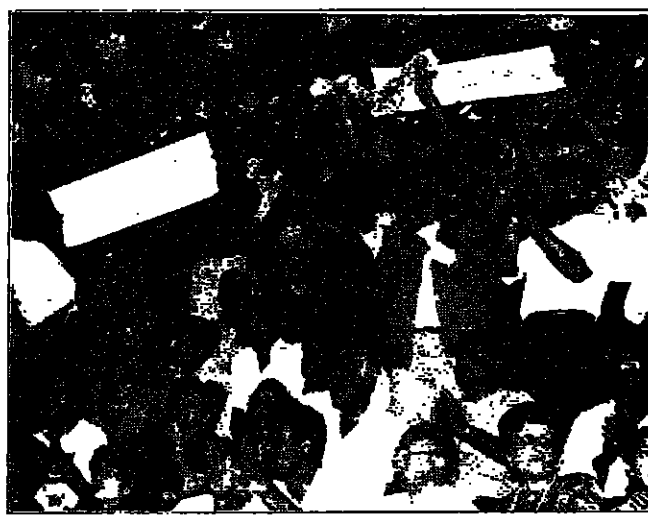
Seine, un chœur de 65 enfants, se rendra en Jordanie sous la direction du chef de chœur Francis Bardot. De Paris viendront le metteur en scène libanais Chérif Khaznadar, et François Grind pour présenter la pièce de théâtre *Julia Donna*, interprétée en arabe notamment par Mireille Maalouf et Ninar Esber.

La venue de tous ces artistes ne va pas sans poser quelques difficultés. «Nous devons surmonter quelques problèmes notamment avec la troupe espagnole Mazanini pour qu'elle participe», explique Akram Masarweh.

Beaucoup d'artistes viendront également d'Europe de l'Est, comme la troupe slovaque de Francis Marlot, les Bulgares de Trakia et une troupe polonaise présentant un spectacle de danse folklorique.

Les sept théâtres et places de Jérash seront pleines de vie pendant deux semaines consécutives. «La programmation a été faite en fonction de toutes les couches sociales et de façon à satisfaire tous les goûts culturels», ajoute Akram Masarweh.

**Dans toute la Jordanie**  
En ce qui concerne les artistes arabes participant à ce festival, il y aura des chanteurs connus pour leur style traditionnel comme Sabah Fakhri de Syrie et Majdah el Roumi du Liban. D'autres représenteront la chanson plus jeune comme Ribhi Rabah de la Jordanie, Mustafa Kamar d'Égypte et Najwa Karam du Liban. «On a tenu à inviter des troupes de chant



Comme chaque année, la vieille cité romaine de Jérash va reprendre vie l'espace de deux semaines grâce au festival.

traditionnel afin de présenter aux jeunes d'autres styles de musique». Des troupes de chant viendront d'Irak, d'Alep en Syrie et du Maroc. Il y aura également du chant soufi dévoué à l'amour de Dieu avec le chanteur d'origine libanaise Bashir Zarkan.

Bien qu'ils fassent partie de la programmation du festival de Jérash, certains groupes joueront notamment au Centre culturel royal d'Amman ou à la citadelle, ainsi qu'à Umm Quais et au Mont Nebo. «Pour répandre ces activités culturelles dans toute la Jordanie, il y aura des spectacles et des concerts donnés dans d'anciennes citadelles, à Kérak, à Ajloun, à Fouhais, et à Amman», explique Akram Masarweh.

Le festival accueillera aussi

des expositions, notamment dans la cave de Zeus. Certaines auront lieu en collaboration avec les Emirats arabes unis. Une autre présentera au public des robes traditionnelles de Palestine et de Jordanie.

La poésie sera aussi elle aussi présente à ce festival. Beaucoup d'artistes arabes viendront lire des textes dans le cadre d'un festival de la poésie organisé en collaboration avec la Fondation de Abd al Hamid Shoman. «Comme c'est un festival national, on a souhaité y associer certaines grandes institutions nationales», explique Akram Masarweh. Car le succès de ce festival dépend de l'engagement de tous les Jordaniens.

Oroub el Abed

## La France et la Jordanie parlementent

Saad Hayel Sour, président de l'Assemblée nationale jordanienne, s'est rendu en France voilà un mois à la tête d'une délégation parlementaire. Il revient sur cette visite et la coopération parlementaire qui existe entre la France et la Jordanie.

**Quelle était la raison de votre visite en France?**

Saad Hayel Sour: Le président de l'Assemblée nationale française, M. Philippe Séguin, avait invité une délégation parlementaire jordanienne représentant tous les partis du parlement, y compris ceux de l'opposition, à se rendre en France. La délégation comprenait Fawzi Touameh de la commission des affaires étrangères, Toujan el Faisal de celle des droits publics, Bassam el Emouch du Front d'action islamiste, Taha el Hababeh du parti de la coalition nationale, Salem el Zawaideh, un député indépendant et moi-même, président de l'Assemblée nationale.

**Dans quel cadre s'inscrit cette invitation?**

Saad Hayel Sour: Cela fait partie de la relation politique qui existe entre la Jordanie et la France. Mais elle découle aussi de l'importance qu'attache la France à l'entretien de liens avec les régimes démocratiques du monde entier. En fait, lors de sa visite en Jordanie au début de cette année, M. Séguin avait pu se rendre compte du pluralisme politique qui existe ici. Il a montré d'ailleurs son admiration pour notre régime en nous invitant en France.

**Quel a été le programme de votre visite?**

Saad Hayel Sour: Nous avons eu des entretiens avec le président de l'Assemblée nationale française, et les représentants de différents partis présents au parlement français. Nous avons aussi rencontré les présidents de certaines commissions parlementaires, comme l'ancien président de la République Valéry Giscard d'Estaing aujourd'hui à la tête de la commission des affaires étrangères.

Au cours de ces rencontres, beaucoup de problèmes généraux touchant à la région ont été abordés: la paix, la stabilité politique, le développement économique.

Les liens existant entre la France et la Jordanie ont été bien sûr au coeur des discussions. Il existe une coopération

économique importante entre la Jordanie et la France, tant au niveau économique que politique. La France ayant au titre de membre de l'Union européenne beaucoup soutenu la Jordanie. Nous nous sommes intéressés à la coopération parlementaire entre l'Assemblée nationale française et le parlement jordanien. Nous nous sommes mis d'accord pour continuer ce genre de rencontre.

Nous attendons une visite de députés français représentants de l'association parlementaire franco-jordanienne pour le mois de septembre.

**Quel jugement portez-vous sur la vie parlementaire en France?**

Saad Hayel Sour: L'expérience de la France en matière de démocratie est une expérience fructueuse. C'est l'exemple à suivre pour chaque pays en ce qui concerne la liberté, les droits de l'homme et l'égalité. Grâce à cette visite, nous avons pu voir l'application pratique de tout ce que nous savons sur la démocratie française.

Nous avons beaucoup apprécié cette expérience et nous allons évidemment appliquer tout ce qui est possible dans notre vie parlementaire.

**Quels changements peut entraîner cette visite?**

Saad Hayel Sour: Il y aura à l'avenir une coopération technique entre la Jordanie et la France. Ainsi nous voulons améliorer l'administration et la gestion du Parlement jordanien en appliquant certaines méthodes employées en France.

**Vous avez assisté en France à une séance parlementaire. Comment jugez-vous son déroulement par rapport à celui d'une séance jordanienne?**

Saad Hayel Sour: Les députés français sont très professionnels. Ils sont beaucoup plus nombreux qu'en Jordanie et prennent librement la parole au cours de la séance.

Un tableau qui me rassure quand je le compare avec les discussions parlementaires qui ont lieu en Jordanie.

Oroub el Abed



Saad Hayel Sour, président de l'Assemblée jordanienne.

### C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Expo-photo

«Heureux dimanche»: 35 tirages noir et blanc illustrent un demi-siècle (1913-1966) de loisirs, de plaisirs et de divertissements vus par des photographes inscrits dans le mouvement humaniste (Denise Colomb, Marcel Bovis...). Jusqu'au 20 juillet au CCF.

Communiqué publicitaire

### Air France récompense ses meilleures agences de voyage

Air France a tenu le 10 juillet au Fort Grand en présence de son Directeur Régional pour le Proche-Orient, M. Yves Picchi, son directeur annuel au cours duquel la compagnie a récompensé ses meilleures agences de voyage. M. Jean-Jacques Ledauhin, Directeur Régional pour la Jordanie, a présenté à cette occasion le nouveau Hub de l'aéroport Charles de Gaulle, un système permettant d'augmenter le nombre de correspondances tout en réduisant le temps de correspondance à 40 minutes. Oriental for travel & tour, Al Towfiq travel, International traders, Haya travel et Alhadiyah travel se sont vus décerner les certificats d'or. Pan pacific travel & tourism, Eastern services et Bishara tour agency ont obtenu des certificats d'argent, alors que Trust tour agency et Amin Kawar & Sons et Alwaha tourism se sont vus remettre des certificats de bronze.

## Le programme du 18 au 24 juillet

**Au théâtre sud**

A partir de 20h30

18/19 juillet

la chanteuse Majdah el Roumi (Liban)

20/21 juillet

le chanteur Mohammad el Mazem (Emirats arabes unis)

21 juillet

la chanteuse Ahlam (Emirats arabes unis)

22 juillet

l'orchestre de jeunes de Philadelphia (Etats-Unis)

23 juillet

la troupe de folklore circassien AL Jil

24 juillet

le chanteur Mustafa Kamar (Égypte)

**Au théâtre Artémis**

A partir de 20h30

18/19 juillet

La pièce de théâtre *Richard III* interprétée par la troupe Odd Sox (Angleterre)

20/21 juillet

la troupe Wajdah interprétant des chants andalous (Maroc)

22/23 juillet

le groupe AL Tourath interprétant des chants d'Alep (Syrie)

24 juillet

la troupe Hasan el Athami interprétant des chants de Makam (Irak)

**Au théâtre de sons et lumières**

A partir de 20h30

18/19 juillet

La troupe nationale d'art populaire (Qatar)

20/21 juillet

la troupe de Zagloul el Damour interprétant des chants populaires Zajal (Liban)

22/23 juillet

La troupe de folklore populaire Trakia (Bulgarie)

24 juillet

la troupe nationale d'art populaire d'Akaba (Jordanie)

18/19 juillet

La troupe de l'Université privée d'Irbid (Jordanie)

20/21 juillet

Le groupe d'art populaire du Nil (Égypte)

22/23 juillet

La troupe folklorique d'Al Rumtha (Jordanie)

24 juillet

La troupe nationale folklorique du Qatar

22/25 juillet

La troupe Hanouneh de folklore palestinien (Palestine)

A partir de 20h30

18/19 juillet

La troupe nationale d'art populaire (Qatar)

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La troupe de folklore populaire Trakia (Bulgarie)

24 juillet

la troupe nationale d'art populaire d'Akaba (Jordanie)

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22/23 juillet

La troupe folklorique d'Al Rumtha (Jordanie)

24 juillet

La troupe nationale folklorique du Qatar

22/25 juillet



## Activities

Royal Cultural Centre .....	661026/7	Concord Cinema .....	677420
American Centre Library .....	820101	Plaza Cinema .....	699238
British Council .....	636147/8	Philadelphia Cinema .....	634144
French Cultural Centre .....	637009		
Goethe Institute .....	641993		
Cervantes Institute (Spanish) .....	610858		
Turkish Cultural Centre .....	639777		
Haya Arts Centre .....	665195		
Y.W.C.A. .....	641793		
Darat al Funun .....	644251		
Alia Art Gallery .....	639203		
Baladna Art Gallery .....	657132		
Nabil Al Mashini Theatre .....	675571		
Nabil & Hisham's Theatre .....	625155		

## Sports Clubs

Al Hussein Sports City .....	667181/5
Orthodox Club .....	810491
Royal Automobile Club .....	815410
Royal Shooting Club .....	736572
Royal Chess Club .....	673713
Royal Racing Club .....	09-801233
Jordan Bridge Club .....	676990
Amman Mun. Library .....	636111
Univ. of Jordan Library .....	843555
R.S.C.N. .....	837931/837937

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The Prime Ministry .....	641211	Labour .....	698186
Amman Greater Municipality .....	636111	Municipalities & Environment .....	641393
Agriculture .....	686151	Parliamentary Affairs .....	641211
Awqaf & Islamic Affairs .....	666141	Planning .....	644466
Culture / Jabal Amman .....	636391	Post & Communications .....	624301
Education & Higher Education .....	669181	Public Health .....	665131
Energy & Mineral Resources .....	815615	Public Works & Housing .....	668481
Finance .....	636321	Social Development .....	673191
Foreign Affairs .....	644361	Supplies .....	602121
Industry & Trade .....	663191	Tourism & Antiquities .....	642511
Information .....	641467	Transport .....	641461
Interior Ministry .....	663111	Water & Irrigation .....	680100
Justice .....	663101	Youth / University .....	604701

## Diplomatic Corps

Algerian .....	641271/2
Australian .....	673246/7
Austrian .....	644635
Bahraini .....	664148/9
Brazilian .....	642185
Belgian .....	675683
Bulgarian .....	618151
Canadian .....	666124
Chilean .....	823360
Cyprus Honorary Cons .....	677559
Czech .....	671813/666135
Danish Consulate Gen .....	603703
Finnish Consulate .....	824654/824676
French .....	641273/4
German .....	689351
Greek .....	671331/2
Hungarian .....	815614
Icelandic Consulate .....	698851
Indian .....	637262
Indonesian .....	828911
Inq .....	639331
Italian .....	638185
Japanese .....	672486/7
Kuwaiti .....	675135/8
Libyan .....	693101/3
Lubnese .....	641351
Moroccan .....	641451
Netherlands .....	619699/196993
New Zealand Consulate .....	636720
North Korean .....	666349
Norwegian Embassy .....	644932/4
Omani .....	686155
Pakistani .....	622787
Poland .....	677517
People's Rep. of China .....	666139
Philippines .....	645161
Polish .....	637153
Qatari .....	682666
Romanian .....	667738
Russian .....	641158
Saudi Arabian .....	814154/6
Slovenia Honorary Cons .....	861542
Sri Lanka Consulate .....	645312
South Korean .....	660745/6
South Africa .....	811194
Spanish .....	614166/9
Sudanese .....	644251/2
Swedish .....	669177/9
Swiss .....	686416/7
Syrian .....	641076
Taiwan .....	671530
Tunisian .....	674307/8
Turkish .....	641251
U.A.E. .....	643347/643341
United Kingdom .....	823108
United States .....	820101
Yemen .....	642381
EEC Delegation .....	668191
ESCWA .....	694351/8
ICRC .....	688645
UNDP/WFP .....	668171/7
UNRWA .....	607398
UNICEF .....	629571
UNESCO .....	606559

## Airlines

Adria Airways .....	667029
Aeroflot .....	641510
Aeromexico .....	694802
Air Canada .....	630879
Air France .....	666055/667824
Air India .....	688301/2
Air Lanka .....	682140
Alitalia .....	625203
Alyemda (Air yemen) .....	653691
American Airlines .....	669068
Arab Wings .....	894484
Austrian Airlines .....	693845/694604
Balkan Airlines .....	665909
British Midland .....	694802
British Airways .....	828801
Cathay Pacific .....	628596
China Airlines .....	636232
Cyprus Airways .....	667028
Delta Air Lines .....	643661
Egypt Air .....	630011
Emirates Airlines .....	643341
Gulf Air .....	633613
Hungarian Airlines .....	622275
Iberia .....	637827/644036
Iran Air .....	622826
Japan Airlines .....	630879
KLM .....	622175
Korean Airlines .....	676624/662236
Libyan Arab Airlines .....	643831/2
Lufthansa .....	601744
Malaysian Airline .....	639575/653446
MEA .....	636104
Olympic .....	630125/638433
Philippine Airlines .....	640200
PIA .....	625981
Polish Airlines .....	625981
Qantas .....	862288
Royal Jordanian .....	678321
Saudia .....	639331
Scandinavian Airlines .....	604499
Singapore Airlines .....	676177
Sudan Airlines .....	694501
Swiss Air (G.S.A.) .....	659791/641906
Syrian Air .....	622147
United Airlines .....	641959
US Air .....	694801/2
TAROM - Romanian .....	637380
Thai Airways .....	637195
Trans World Airline .....	623430
Turkish Airlines .....	659102
Yemenia Airways .....	628175
Queen Alia Airport .....	(08) 53200
RJ Flight Info .....	(08) 53200

## Important Numbers

<b>Emergencies</b>	
Police .....	192/621111
Civil Defence H.Q. .....	193/198/199
Fire Brigade .....	623090/93
Ambulance .....	199
Blood Bank .....	775121
Traffic Police .....	625943/639703
Traffic Accidents .....	897467/8
Highway Police .....	787111
<b>Hospitals</b>	
Akleh Maternity .....	642441/2
Al-Ahli, Abdali .....	664164/6
Al-Bashir, Ashrafieh .....	775111/26
Al-Muasher Hospital .....	667227/9
Amal Hospital .....	674155
Army, Marka .....	891611/15
Hussein Medical Centre .....	813813
Jabal Amman Maternity .....	642362
Khaledi Maternity .....	644281/6
Malhas, J. Amman .....	636141
Palestine, Shmeisani .....	664171/4
Queen Alia Hospital .....	602240/50
Shmeisani Hospital .....	607431
The Islamic, Abdali .....	666127/37
University Hospital .....	845845
<b>General</b>	
Amman Municipality .....	843402
Electricity Complaints .....	121
Prices complaints .....	666181
Hotel complaints .....	08/53200
Sewage Complaints .....	896390
Water Complaints .....	656390/91
Jordan Television .....	773111/19
Radio Jordan .....	773111/19
Post Office Info .....	750981/2/3
Telephone Information .....	121

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## THE STAR'S WORK COMPUTING & HIGH TECH NOTES

Edited by Zeid Nasser

### The virtual Web servers adopted by corporations, to gain an Internet identity: Where are the servers?

By Jawad Abbassi  
Special to The Star

THE WORLD Wide Web (WWW)—the latest buzz word on the Internet—was never intended to grow into the massive thing it is today. Originally, the research labs in Switzerland created the Web's HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) for purely academic and research purposes.

HTML is the web's standard format and was intended to be a mere tool to display research papers in a text format. Its functionality was to be limited to providing the ability to read the information stored in computer servers—WWW Servers—for users with different kinds of computer platforms.

It wasn't until an innovative young computer scientist by the name of Mark Andersen developed a Web Browser, which is a software used to view web information, that supported pictures, graphics and sounds.

The advent of Mosaic in 1993 was a milestone in the short history of the Internet because it opened the doors for utilizing the World Wide Web in marketing, interactive advertisement and even selling. The web, therefore, proliferated: companies of all lines of business started to have web sites, taking the format of <http://www.companyname.com>, that introduce their operations and products.

Governments, non profit organizations, newspapers, universities and even individuals also started to have web presence for practical reasons. While it would be readily understood why an organization like the World Bank or a newspaper like the Financial Times would like to have a web presence, trying to figure out why a Danish medical student would want to develop a web page explaining how to travel through Jordan with a back pack, would be rather hard.

On this note, this page really exists, just search for the word Jordan in the search engine yahoo (<http://www.yahoo.com>).

So, would a company need to invest in sophisticated computer equipment to get a WWW server containing its web pages? The answer is a definite no; having a WWW server is simply achieved by leasing some Hard Disk space on a Web Serving workstation, and registering a web domain of the type "www.companynx.com" or "www.organisation.org" (this is usually done by the owners of the Web server).

So, a computer workstation, acting as a web server, could have quite a few of WWW domains utilizing its serving capacity, and good communications links to the Internet.

By simply leasing disk space, rather than investing in the hardware, a company gets a Virtual WWW server, which is as good as a real one. The advantages for

this include relieving businesses from the burden and cost of maintaining the hardware and also placing a company's web page on a high performance server.

For instance, the White House's WWW server, with the address of "http://www.whitehouse.gov", needs not be inside the White House itself but could be anywhere from California to Tokyo. Of course, I would definitely rule out that the White House's web page would be maintained in Tokyo.

In addition, one of the biggest advantages of a Web page with a proprietary, virtual web server is the ability to utilize the "email forwarding" feature of the WWW server. Suppose a company in Jordan with the name X has an email address, registered at one of Jordan's three email providers. Its email address would be its name (in this case X) followed by the domain name of the service (X@nets.com.jo or X@access.com.jo or X@go.com.jo).

Now if this same company goes for a Virtual Web server with the Domain name of "WWW.X.com", it could set email forwarding in a way that email sent to Sales@X.com or Info@X.com could be forwarded to its email account in one of the Jordanian services such as X@nets.com.jo. Hence, creating a strong corporate feel for its email addresses.

Of course, virtual web servers that add corporate feel could be utilized by companies equally virtual and out for sinister business. So, all yea web browsers, beware!!

email: Abbas-  
si@NETS.com.jo

### Have you noticed:

Everyone is talking about the Internet and on-line services. The Workstation page is tuning into the forum for these topics. Fax us on 648298 or email us at [Star@NETS.com.jo](mailto:Star@NETS.com.jo) with your views. We and our readers want to know them.

## HP maintains its lead

LAST SUNDAY, 14 July, 1996, Scientific & Medical Supplies Co. (SMS) held a special event to announce Hewlett-Packard's strategy of "Color in the Office", at the forefront of which was an announcement regarding Hewlett-Packard's latest color product, the HP ColorJet. Mr. Roland Mattise, area business manager from Hewlett-Packard Switzerland, made a presentation and answered questions, highlighting the nature of Hewlett-Packard's business worldwide and in the region. Printing, scanning and imaging technologies occupy a huge share of Hewlett-Packard's business and the company seeks to maintain its lead in these sectors. Today, Hewlett-Packard is number one worldwide in printers (laser and ink jet), and number one in scanners. On the PC side, Hewlett-Packard is fast gaining a leading position, and has reached the number five position worldwide in PC sales. Among the very inter-

esting points that Mr. Mattise made, to support his company's belief that "color in the office" resembles the future trend, was



Mr. Mattise speaking at the Hewlett-Packard event

a prediction that, as of next year, sales of color printers will exceed those of black & white printers, for the first time in history. Mr. Mattise told *The Star* that Hewlett-Packard was already phasing out its black & white printing products in favor of color solutions. According to studies, color increases compre-

hensibility and understanding of material being read by up to 73%. Hewlett-Packard believes that the trend towards color will be stimulated by the low cost per copy of color printed material, which Hewlett-Packard maintains throughout its products. Another main point of focus was the strength of Hewlett-Packard's distribution channels. "Our focus is on developing and supporting the channel," said Mr. Mattise. "By working closely with dealers and resellers, we expect that we will reach the widest possible base of customers. Through training and constant follow-up and support from our corporate headquarters, we will achieve even better customer support."

"The high quality of our products, and their reasonable pricing, have long been the reason behind the success of Hewlett-Packard. With our attention to customers and serious commitment to the region, we should maintain our position as leaders in the Middle East," concluded Mr. Mattise.

## More views on IPR laws & piracy

Editor's note: Zeid Lama writes to *The Star* on his views supporting IPR laws. We would like to state to Mr. Lama, contrary to any misunderstanding, that we do not "defend the cause of criminals", as he calls them. And we are not anti-capitalist, or even anti anything when it comes to IPR laws. We are just trying to bring in as many opinions as possible. Here are excerpts of Mr. Lama's comments:

IT IS not surprising that the issue of intellectual property rights has become a hot topic in Jordan. However, the fact that it is a "controversial" one surprises me tremendously. It seems that a lack of genuine research and a great deal of information has created differing opinions within the Jordanian retail and public sectors. In addressing this issue, I would like to make my strongest point first. Do opponents of IPR realize that they are defending the cause of criminals? The sentence by Zeid Nasser (Interface, 4th July), "Users would actually have to pay for every single piece of software they use" exemplifies the anti-capitalist attitude that is keeping us from refining our competitiveness. The concept of "actually" having to compensate in return for a product or service is a tried and true concept. Piracy is not. Second, does piracy really benefit us? Admittedly, I have previously been a user of pirated software, audio and video products, and I hated every minute of

it. From a purely economic point of view, it is not "cheaper" to consume pirated products, because you do not get the quality, reliability and support of the original product, placing aside any moral, ethical or legal issues. Third, where does this enigma of "throwing Jordanian businesses off balance" stem from? All they have to do is discontinue the sale of pirated products and replace them with ones that bear the proper rights of the creator. We need to harbor the creative potential of Jordanians starting today. Global markets are highly competitive and we are discussing issues that really have no dividing point. If we ignore the importance of protection, our artists, software developers and performers will lose the spirit of competition before even starting.

Another reader, Mr. Jabra F. Ghannem, writes to us his views on this issue. Here are excerpts of Mr. Ghannem's letter:

IN RESPONSE to your latest article, in which you touched on software piracy issues I first want you, and everybody, to know that I consider software piracy morally wrong and unethical in spite of all the economic reasons that I will tell you about and that make me believe that it is crazy for any computer company to fight piracy. I believe that this is an age of free software distribution and sharing economics. Fifty percent of the software I use on my computer are freeware. The aim of the soft-

ware companies is gaining market share. Now, the other point I'd like to make concerns what we economists call differential pricing, where you market the same good for two sets of customers at two different prices. In the Western world this is done through the shareware concept where you get a downgraded, lower priced copy of a software to do specific functions. Third, the income level in most Arab countries is in many cases less than 10% of that in Europe and the US, which means that software houses can't popularize their software unless they adjust their prices to the income level of their potential customers.

In conclusion, two things are needed for software companies to succeed: more concentration on service and support and training as revenue generators. There should be an adaptation of price and product differentiation and customization to adjust to the incomes of the consumers.

Sending private spies to catch pirates won't fix the lack of vision and strategy that are prevalent in most Arab software companies. In fact, I believe that if Arab software companies want to popularize their software and gain the hearts and pockets of Arab consumers, they should use those pirates as their distributors supplying them with customized versions of their software. These pirates won't do bad in technical support too, that's more than what the production houses can offer.

## INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

### IPR enforcement in Jordan (3): Software developers speak

SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS in Jordan are at the center of the intellectual property rights (IPR) debate. They are the ones whose businesses will be most affected, in the computer software industry. To shed some light on their views, we sought a representative opinion of this growing sector, to highlight their opinion.

This is especially important now, as software developers in Jordan have been working towards more unity and better coordination. The results, so far, look quite promising, with the formation of the Software Publishers Association, which will provide the nucleus for the Jordanian Software Exporters Association.

Mr. Imad Malhas, general manager of IdealSoft, a Jordan-based software development company that specializes in Arabic software for business and finance, talked to *The Star* on the newly formed alliance among Jordanian software developers and their shared vision regarding the application of IPR laws in Jordan.

"We, as professional developers, are capable of providing our skills and expertise to international companies, thus we need to benefit from the massive gains that IPR laws will provide us in this respect," said Mr. Malhas. "International software publishers are seeking to outsource their software development, in the aim to both save time on development and save costs. Take India, for example. Indian programmers have become world famous for providing their skills to American and European companies, in coding certain parts of their software. It has turned the Indian software development market into a true export industry and has created employment opportunities locally. This wouldn't have been possible if India did not enforce its IPR laws," he added.

"In Jordan, we have the technical expertise to provide such services to international companies. In fact, our people are even more skilled, better educated and more exposed to tools and techniques. Still, an international company, although wanting to work with a Jordanian company, will be strongly advised by lawyers not to come to Jordan. This is the essence of the problem and the main barrier that prevents Jordan's software development market from becoming a strong export industry, denying us, developers, of the gains." As a matter of fact, the huge size of the software business worldwide is dictating that international companies seek out help from developers in Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Without IPR laws in Jordan and the Arab World, we will lose out on these business opportunities. As to locally produced software, the view of Jordanian developers is clear. They need protection for their shrink-wrapped products, but would like to open a discussion regarding so-called "affected parties." Students and researchers should not be denied the opportunity to use software. Already, we at IdealSoft are providing free original software for academic use and we would encourage others to follow this policy," said Mr. Malhas. The argument that IPR laws will prevent young, financially unable programmers from gaining access to the necessary tools to develop their skills, is not impossible to solve. Public libraries and "common centers" can purchase a few legal copies of development tools and allow tens of programmers to use their facilities to develop their own code. Once the programmer's skill mature enough to approach a customer, he/she should be able to cover the cost of purchasing original development tools.

Regarding pirate shops, Mr. Malhas stated that "the illegal software trade in Jordan is 'negligible traffic', compared in size to the gains to be realized from proper IPR enforcement in the country. So, abolishing it makes sense economically. That is, taking into account that international software publishers will actually provide more reasonably priced software for local use." The idea of providing local price brackets for international software is one that all Jordanian software developers agree to.

"We can apply IPR laws in phases, that include grace periods. First, we implement IPR laws on private companies and governmental institutions using software. Then, after a fixed period of time, we can tackle the matter of individual users and students."

"It has to be a win-win situation, for the parties involved. It is necessary that we all respect the principle of IPR first, then we can work it out in the best way that addresses all the angles involved," concluded Mr. Malhas.

By Lisa Dillman  
LA Times-Washington Post  
News Service

TOM DOLAN is riding around in a cab near Central Park and sees a pond, turns to his greatest rival and shrugs, saying: "Let's do it." They jump in the water and start racing as throngs of New Yorkers watch, cheering and taking photos.

Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi, redux? Not quite. That's a commercial that will never get made because Dolan's greatest rival and polar opposite is not American. He is Jani Sievinen from Finland.

Dolan, on the eve of the Olympics, virtually stands alone on the US men's swimming team, figuratively and commercially. As the world-record holder in the 400-meter individual medley, he is considered the only heavy favorite for an individual gold medal among the men. (Jeff Rouse, the world-record holder in the 100 backstroke, is a slight favorite but finished second in the US trials).

Nike has alertly signed the telegraphic Dolan, hoping he will follow in the flip-flops of Mark Spitz, Matt Biondi, Tom Jager and Janet Evans.

A breakthrough performance by Dolan could prevent what is usually a red, white and blue celebration on the pool deck from simply being blue. American dominance is a thing of the past, and if you haven't realized that, officials from US Swimming have reiterated the point by issuing dire predictions after the trials in March: no gold medals for the women, four for the men.

This burst of swimming gladiators cuts both ways. Should a weak performance occur in Atlanta, well, it was predicted months ago. And if the low threshold of expectations is surpassed even slightly, the meet can easily be considered a success.

The need to downsize aspirations didn't happen overnight. On the men's side, the fall has been much harder because of the sheer dominance of the past. In 1976, the US women won one gold medal in a relay. But the men won 12 of 13 events, and took the silver and the bronze in the 200 breaststroke, which was won by David Wilkie of Great Britain, the single non-American victor.

Eight years later, the US men won nine gold medals and American swimmers combined for 21 golds, buoyed by the

## Swimmer Dolan: home alone?

East Bloc boycott. But by 1992, there were subtle signs of slippage when the men took six gold medals: four individual and two relays.

The real splash of cold water in the face came at Indianapolis in mid-March.

At the US trials, for the first time since 1920, no world record or American records were set at the meet. Four years ago, three world and eight US records were broken in the same pool.

Not only did a handful of vaunted names from the past—Sumner Sanders, Anita Nall, Melvin Stewart and Jager—fail to make the squad, 20 of the 26 individual winners at the trials had slower times than the winning trials times in 1992.

Nall had placed second at the 1992 Games in the 100 breaststroke (1 minute 8.17 seconds, an American record) and third in the 200 breaststroke (2:26.88). At the trials in Indianapolis, she finished fourth in the 100 breaststroke in 1:10.66 and fourth in the 200 breaststroke in 2:30.77.

Sanders didn't come as close in the 200 butterfly. Her winning time in Barcelona was 2:08.57, and at Indianapolis, she finished eighth in 2:15.32.

Jager finished seventh in the 50 freestyle, and Stewart took fifth in the 100 butterfly and narrowly missed making the squad in the 200 butterfly, finishing third.

Their individual problems were reflective of the collective malaise at the trials. Since then, the results of the US trials have been analyzed thoroughly. What exactly ails US swimming has become a popular topic, along with the attendant societal and international implications.

But the expected route to mediocrity has been thrown off

because the American coaches started spotting the times at trials in other countries, downloading information from China, Australia and Germany into their computers.

"It seems like everyone is gearing for Atlanta. It'll be interesting to see how the momentum goes. The main thing for the American team is if we can be real good the first few days. Then I think we'll be real good the whole meet. The first day has a lot to do with the tone."

"In Barcelona, we were kind of surprised. There were some upsets the first day. Though we swam well, we didn't have the results we expected. The coaching staff had their work cut out for them to get the team back up again. There's nothing like getting the snowball going in your direction, particularly when you are swimming at home."

Having the Olympics at home can be a bonus, as was evidenced in Barcelona. Spain did much better than expected in many events, and King Juan Carlos seemed to be on hand for every gold medal ceremony.

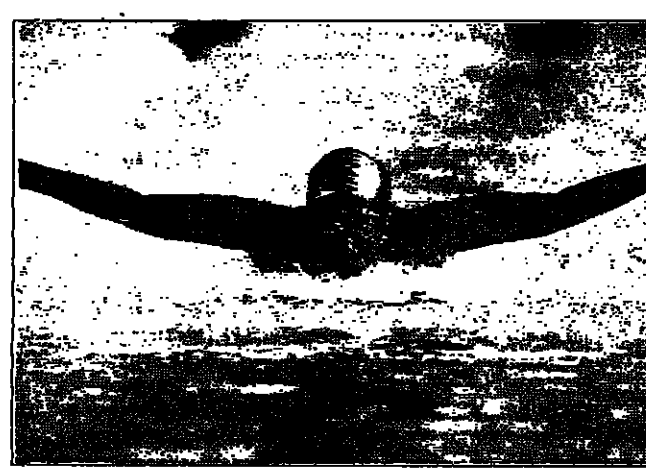
Men's assistant swimming coach Eddie Reese also believes good old American stubbornness will help shave times in the face of adversity.

"Most of our success occurs because we overcome things," Reese said. "All you have to do is throw up a barrier and we'll find a way."

How did this barrier get so high, anyway? Theories abound: the emphatic emergence of the Chinese, the re-emergence of the Australians, the disappearance of larger-than-life stars. Some blame the influx of foreign swimmers heading to the United States for college. There is the dizzying array of sporting

choices for American youngsters—after all, it seems like there are more boys training for the street luge at the X Games than the 1,500-meter freestyle at the Olympic Games.

One collegiate coach, Frank Busch of Arizona, said he believes a fundamental shift in the United States explains the



change in swimming's world order. "In society, things have changed—both parents work now," Busch said. "Not too many moms and dads want to get up two, three hours before they (have) to get up and take their kids to morning practice. Nor do they want to sit for three

days at a meet.

"I think US Swimming sometimes takes the idea that they're going to change society. The work ethic is not there, so they have to instill it in kids. US Swimming is not a parent. We need to sell our sport to anything, any kind of water activities. We need to have people in short pools, long pools, water polo. We need to get people in it, and we don't do a very good job."

"Once you get them in the pool maybe the kids will find out. Maybe I'm not as fast as Johnny, but maybe I can last longer, therefore I can gravitate toward the distances." Bringing the springs in is a good thing because it's kept people in the sport. Otherwise we'd be in serious trouble."

The inability to make a living from swimming alone has driven some from the sport prematurely, according to Michigan Coach Jon Urbanchek.

"The reason a lot of the swimmers quit is because there is no money in swimming," said Urbanchek, an assistant with the US men's team. "You can't afford to keep swimming. You don't feel like always leeching off your parents. It's kind of embarrassing to live at home and use your dad's credit card your whole life."

Dolan, 20, is hoping to avoid that after skipping his final year of college eligibility at Michigan.

"It was the perfect time for me to move on," he said. "If I can get the recognition of the sport out more myself, then that is going to better everyone in the sport. Matt (Biondi) and Tom (Jager) have done a great job of publicizing themselves and the sport. Hopefully, I can do the same within my own generation."

The man considered the best hope for American swimming does not worry about the immense Olympic pressure sweeping him off his feet. Not only is Dolan projected to win the 400 IM in Atlanta, he could bring home gold medals in the 200 IM and 400 freestyle.

## 'Pele of women's soccer' giving chronic fatigue the boot

wanted to try the diet—which she learned about through a doctor at Penn State University—as soon as possible. "My dad was like 'Do you think this is a good time to try this?' Akers said. "But I just figured why not have the opportunity to be healthy when nothing else has worked." Akers had tried diets before, but never this specific one. "Before, I had just tried to improve my diet and ate healthy and small meals," Akers said. "I had a healthy diet, but I didn't restrict myself from sugar and caffeine." But this time, she decided she had no choice, particularly if she wanted to make the most of her first, and possibly only, shot at an Olympic gold medal—this is the first year for women's soccer as a medal sport. "What I survive on is rice, potatoes, salads, vegetables, a lot of gluten-free products in health stores, Corn Flakes, Rice Krispies, rice milk," Akers said. The hope is that once the 10 weeks are over, the toxins that cause her to feel bad will be fully out of her body. "I'll start adding some foods to see what I can tolerate," Akers said. "But I will probably stick to this the rest of my life and maybe eventually my body will right itself."

For now, Akers has to plan ahead when she goes on the road.

"I take a trunk-full of food with me and I have to be prepared for every circumstance on the road," she said.

She doesn't have to go far, however, for her first trip to the Olympics in Atlanta, a few hours north of the US team's training camp in Orlando, Fla.

Before the new diet, Akers was merely hoping to be able to make it through the Olympics. But now, if she can get over a pesky ankle sprain, she plans on being able to play all out, every game. The ankle sprain has limited Akers' recent work in team practices and games, but she says she should be all right for the Olympics.

"I have some reserves in there now," Akers said. "I don't go on the field feeling empty and sick. I'm a more energetic, dynamic player."

And that could be the difference in the US team's hopes of winning a gold medal. Akers is the team's all-time leading scorer and holds seven national team match, season and career records. In 1991, Akers, a forward,

scored 10 goals, including five in one game, as the United States won the inaugural FIFA Women's World Championship. With Akers injured in 1995, the US lost in the semifinals.

"She's still on my starting line-up of the best team in the world," said US National coach Tony DiCicco. "When she's healthy and feeling good and in the line-up, she adds a lot to the team."

DiCicco, however, said Akers' health problems of the past few years have forced him to build a team that can win without her. Akers made the cut for the final 16-person team even though DiCicco was unsure of her availability.

"I've prepared this team as if she's not a part of it," DiCicco said. "And if she's there, then it's a bonus. We are prepared to win without her."

The United States is considered a gold medal favorite, along with Norway. The two countries are seeded first in each of the two four-country groups, and they could meet in the semifinals. The US defeated Norway, which won world championship last year, 1-0 earlier this season.

"Our goal is to win it," Akers said. "We want that gold medal."

Still, Akers said the chronic fatigue syndrome forced her to consider life without soccer earlier than she planned; something she now views as a positive.

"I thought I'd lost my career three years ago," Akers said. "It forced me to grow in areas I never would have explored. For one thing, my spirituality has just exploded and I've learned that I can contribute to this world not just as a world-class soccer player."

But for now, she said, it feels real good to again be a fully world-class soccer player.